

Trail Rider

MAGAZINE

YAMAHA YZ450F

GODZILLA ON A DIET

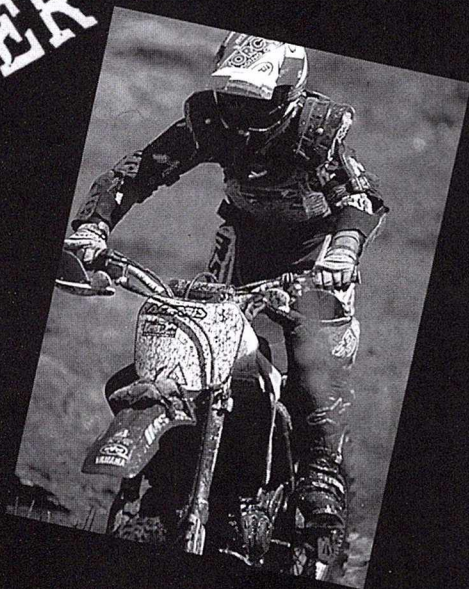
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On the cover: Chris Collum tries to keep our test YZ450 out of the tree-tops, with only about 80 percent success. The YZ450 is totally different from the YZ426, and very short on subtlety; but, it could be a great woods bike with a few little changes. Photo by Mark Uth.

March 2003
Volume 33 Number 3

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UNEXPECTED
C O M P A N Y

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Warning: You know, we only have so much time. It's important that you enjoy every minute, and I mean that. But it's high time we all treated each other with a little more respect and consideration. This earth is getting smaller every day, and if we continue to ensure that we hate each other we're going find it pretty grim living here before long. That goes for other dirt bikers as well as hikers, dog walkers, whatever. Be nice to people, and you might find that they're not so bad themselves. And ride safe, don't get hurt, and don't sue us if you do. Your fate is in your hands when you ride, in more ways than one.

Fine Print

Subscriptions: Subscriptions are available from Trail Rider Magazine, P.O. Box 2038, Medford Lakes NJ 08055, at \$20 U.S. per 12 issues (one year). Canadian subscriptions are \$30 yearly, in U.S. funds. We're not selling overseas subscriptions any more. We don't have a Visa & Mastercard merchant's account, so we can't sell by credit card, and neither are we set up to "bill you" for a subscription. The only way to get it is send in a check, cash or money order, and we'll do the rest.

Renewals: If you like Trail Rider, and plan to renew, it would be really helpful if you looked at the label on your magazine and checked the expiration date. When you start getting close to expiring (the magazine, not you), send in a check along with the order blank from an issue, or just your name, address, and sub number (above your name on the label), and tell us that you want to renew. This way we can avoid sending out a renewal notice, which will save us money we can then spend on food. If you drag your feet and forget to renew until you stop getting issues, there's no way we can "start you with the last issue" you missed. We have to start you with the next scheduled mailing, and you'll have to buy the missed issues as back issues, if we have any left. We mail out the magazine every month like clockwork, on or about the 17th, so renew as early in the month as possible in order to not miss it.

Back Issues: A limited number of back issues are available. Write us and let us know the month and year, and send \$2.95 per copy, plus U.S. Postage of \$3 for up to four magazines. More than four and we'll have to figure out the postage. Don't use the shotgun approach and tell us to "send all the mags with XR400 tests" unless you have plenty of time to wait. (Hint: We never had an official XR400 test bike).

Address Changes: If you don't want to miss an issue, let us know in advance of your move, so we can update our files before we mail your magazine into the ozone. The P.O. is supposed to forward magazines if you tell them to, but they don't do it in a hurry.

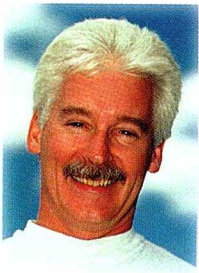
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Advertising: Retail advertisers are strongly encouraged to get in touch with us if you want to advertise in the Northeastern market, because we've got a dedicated, faithful readership of about 5,000 hardy souls, and the number is growing steadily every month. Besides that we like to eat, as we explained above. Advertising is what keeps this rag alive, and we appreciate your business.

Contributors: We pay \$50 a page for copy, and \$10 each for photos, but we don't print just anything that comes in. Call us and we'll talk about it.

Yankee Trader: Subscribers can advertise their bikes for sale free in Yankee Trader. Just write it down and mail it in, don't call us with it. Thanks!

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Last Over

by Paul Clipper

Glory Days

Wasted Uth and I took a trip out to California this past month to try out the new Yamaha WRs, more or less. I say more or less because in the space of a simple little trip we wound up putting 544 miles on a rental car, and in the process did a huge loop of Southern California.

Getting off the plane and finding a place to stay ate up very little mileage. We'd been comparing notes on fun places to stay "downtown," and wound up at the Inn at Venice Beach, a block from the ocean at the nerve center of California Casual. The place gets our highest recommendation, not just for the accommodations but for the Baja Cantina and its ample bar next door.

After a fine night's entertainment we groggily made our way towards Hungry Valley in the morning, and spent the rest of the day tooling around on some very neat '03 WRs that you'll read more about in upcoming issues. This also didn't put a whole lot of miles on the car rental.

However, in the waning hour of the afternoon, when the bikes were being loaded back up and we were sufficiently collapsed in the front of our Taurus SC, the obvious question came up: "What do you want to do now?" After all, we had until Sunday, and it was only Friday afternoon.

"You know what would be a great thing?" Mark said to me, "I think we should head on down to Mexico and look up Super Hunky. You know, I haven't met him yet."

That was all the prodding I needed. The Hunk, otherwise known as Rick Sieman, legendary founding editor of Dirt Bike magazine, was a stranger to Mark but very far from a stranger to me. There were times when I felt like Hunky and I had been down in the foxholes together, and sometimes on opposite sides. Yes, I know him well, and I know that introducing someone new to Rick is a treat that can't be passed up.

The rest of the night was decided—drive immediately to San Diego and find suitable lodging—but how to get there was the question. On a Friday night the freeways between Gorman and San Diego would be a nightmare, so we decided to head east a bit and make a big southern bite through the desert rather than along the coast. By some miracle it was the most satisfying shortcut I'd ever devised, and we missed nearly all of the urban traffic and landed in Mission Beach, San Diego, in not much more than three hours. We stayed, of course, at the Surfer Motor

Lodge, this time right on the beach, and after our evening's refreshments snored to the sound of waves crashing outside our window.

In the morning we crossed the border and met Rick and his wife Tina for breakfast. He's got a great place down there in Rosarito; his own little corner of the world and I admire him for it. He's got a beautiful house as well; I figure he paid about 20 percent of what the place would be worth here north of the border.

Well, so we sat and talked, and told stories.


never forgotten that. Neither have I, and lord knows I've tried.

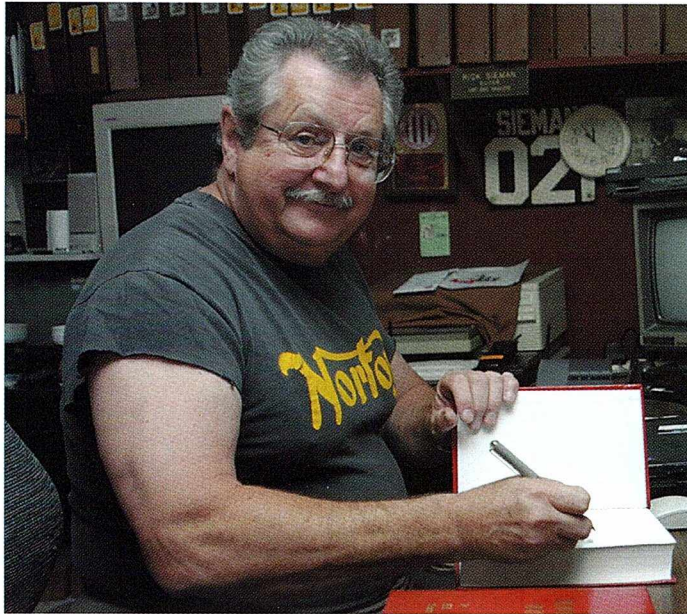
We had a lot of fun out in his yard, which, considering the dry weather, caught all the overflow from his small garage. There would be all manner of bikes around, vintage and un-vintage, apart and together, and scores of piles of random parts. Moving in and out of the mess was Tripod, Rick's three-legged German Shephard, and of course there was a pool in the back and all the usual collection of lawn furniture and

such. We did all we could to stay out of the office, so there were plenty of times we'd get together and work right at his house. We'd put two typewriters back-to-back at a patio table, sit down facing each other, and goad each other into writing something decent with no pre-planning whatsoever. That was our Dueling Editors period, and I remember one time when we each came up with column ideas, started writing, decided we didn't like our subjects, and so we switched. He took over my idea and finished it, and I finished his.

Honestly, neither one of us ever suffered from writer's block, but I can remember plenty of times when we'd sit in that yard smoking and drinking, and bouncing ideas around. If I had a few extra ideas I'd offer them to him, and he always had a few story ideas to share. If we really ran the bucket dry we'd load up a couple of bikes and go riding, and that would always get the juices flowing.

It was a long, long time ago; far longer now than I really care to think about. I'm sure that 20 years of living and working like an angry hermit has ruined me for group activities like the Dueling Editors, and I certainly don't miss the smoking. But we had a hell of a thing going back then. Two cocky writers on the staff of the biggest dirt bike magazine in the world, selling more magazines per month than any dirt book can even dream about these days. We had our little corner of the world firmly by the short hairs, and believe me we enjoyed it to the fullest extent allowed by law. In my weak moments I do miss those days.

But Super Hunky is alive and well, enjoying his little corner of Mexico and still raising a little bit of a ruckus here and there. You can read his ramblings in a couple of columns on the online site www.offroad.com, where he does the Checkpoint and Don't Ask columns. And if you're ever dumb enough to write in a question to his Don't Ask column, ask him about the Solar Powered Editor and see what he says. 



Rick's mellowed quite a bit from the old days, but he still has the spark burning inside. We told Mark a couple of stories from back when I worked with him at Dirt Bike, and some of them bear repeating here.

One of his favorites was the time I walked into his yard in California, and found him sitting at a rickety typewriter stand on a kitchen chair, with his IBM Selectric in front of him. Next to him, on an overturned five-gallon oil can, was a huge pitcher of ice, vodka and grapefruit juice, and a rather large glass. The best part was that he was dressed in a pair of bright red bikini underwear shorts, and nothing else. Rick has never been what you might call emaciated, and with a good start on his summer tan there in the yard he looked like the strawberry Buddha. With a big Marsh-Wheeling cigar clamped between his teeth he called out when he saw me, "Saul baby! I'm right on it today, I'm cranking out some Pulitzer Prize material I kid you not!"

I just stood there and took it all in, and cried out, "It's the solar-powered editor!" And he's



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Hartford M.C. Expo is Good P.R.

For the fourth year in a row, the Connecticut Motorsports Business Association donated a booth space to NETRA at the Hartford Motorcycle Expo. NETRA VP Mike Stone set up a multi-media display with NETRA videos, which attracted crowds of viewers, many of whom then asked for more info on NETRA, NETRA events, and where to ride.

Manning the booth were NETRA Administrator Jerry Shinnars, Mike Stone, Bruce Peristere, CT Ramblers President Pete Koehler, Aaron Koehler, Eric Koehler, NETRA Director Frosty Clark, Adam Falkowski, Chipper Falkowski, Harold Clark, and Paul Kelly. This group answered loads of questions and handed out NETRA Newsletters, NETRA brochures, info on where to ride, ORV registration info, and MA State Forest ORV rules.

The CMBA also donated a booth space to KORP For Fun, a free youth rider training program designed and directed by Tina Biello, with sponsorship and assistance from the NETRA-

member club Pathfinders MC, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Suzuki, and Fox Racing. This kids off-road program teaches kids basic off-road motorcycle skills as well as basic bike maintenance and rider safety. These courses are already booked for nearly every Saturday of the 2003 riding season at Thomaston Dam Recreation Area in CT. A key element of this program is a weekly essay contest, with winners receiving the use of a new Suzuki minibike or trail bike for the course. More info is available from Tina Biello at (860) 274-9352.

There were many parents with young kids at the Expo looking for events and places to ride, so the NETRA Nervous Novice and Junior Enduro series got a lot of plugs. Another recurring question was, "where can I ride my quad?" Since there is no legal riding area for quads on public land in CT, info was handed out on the five state forests in the Berkshires of MA which allow ATVs and trail bikes (as a result of our trail maintenance contracts with the MA DEM).

Leroy Winters Memorial 7th Annual ISDT Reunion Ride



ISDT Memorial Ride Aiming For Huge Success

The seventh annual Leroy Winters International Six Days Trial Reunion Ride comes to the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts on October 4th and 5th of this year, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the first (and only) U.S. ISDT (Dick Mann points out that the 1984 event at the Zink Ranch in Oklahoma was an "ISDE," run under today's format).

Based at the spectacularly scenic 400 acre farm of lifelong trail rider Jim Hoellerich, the gathering of veteran ISDT riders will honor all those ISDT vets of the 1973 event who are able to attend, including the only U.S. team to ever win the ISDT Silver Vase, the Husqvarna team of Ron Bohn, Dick Burleson, Ed Schmidt, and Malcolm Smith.

As in past Reunion Rides, all veterans of any ISDT or ISDE, along with anyone with a vintage enduro bike (must be street licensed) who wishes to ride along with the ISDT vets over two days of vintage-friendly Berkshire trails and abandoned old town roads can join the fun. The organizing Pathfinders M.C. are planning a Saturday offering of two trail loops of about 20 miles each, and a single 35-mile Sunday loop. Special test sections will give those with a penchant to still test themselves their opportunity, but the trail route itself will meet Reunion Ride Founder Dick Mann's requirement: "Nobody who has no trouble with their bike should lose any route marks on time. I'm thinking of 50 year old riders on 30 year old bikes when I talk about 'vintage-friendly trail.'"

Enhancing the ISDT flavor of the event will be the parc ferme overnight impound and start area, and special tests along the trail route which will include timed terrain and hillclimb tests. An acceleration/braking test and grass track race finale will take place at the Hoellerich farm, handy for spectating.

The location in the Berkshire Hills of northwestern Massachusetts will utilize many trails and woods roads in the 11,000 acre Savoy Mountain State Forest, along with surrounding country roads, some still in use and others long abandoned and unmaintained. Some of the planned route will include actual sections of trail used in the 1973 ISDT.

This will be a once in a lifetime coming together for all who have any interest in the ISDT, at the site of our only U.S. ISDT in history. Vets, come to ride with fellow ISDT vets. Non-vets, come to ride with and meet our ISDT/ISDE vets, or come to watch the action. Attend the Saturday evening banquet where all the ISDT riders on hand will be honored, as will the memory of "Mr. Berkshire," Al Eames, the man responsible for making the '73 U.S. ISDT a truly world class success.

Watch for this column in upcoming issues of Trail Rider for the latest details, and log onto www.pathfindersmc.org for information on participating at any level.

With the AMA now encouraging and insuring events under their new ATVA program, NETRA clubs should consider adding ATV classes at some events. There is a huge demand, and no other organization is addressing this demand with ATV trail events in New England.

A reminder to dealers that NETRA posters with tear-off membership applications is available by e-mailing the NETRA Administrator's office: NETRAman@NETRA.org.

NETRA KTM Trail Maintenance Awards

NETRA and KTM Sportmotorcycles are recognizing the top participants in ORV trail work parties in New England as 2002 Trail Maintenance Champions. Three Grand Champions are receiving \$500 certificates towards the purchase of any new KTM motorcycle, plus an AGV Advanced Composite helmet.

These Grand Champions are Steve Zdon, Mark Bettencourt, and Scott Smith. Steve Zdon, of the Greylock Riders, participated in ten Berkshire Trails Council work parties in Savoy State Forest (MA). Steve is Vice President of the Berkshire Trails Council, and has been a strong advocate and successful negotiator for ORV trail access for decades. Mark Bettencourt participated in nine Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders work parties in Freetown State Forest (MA). Mark is a NETRA Director and has been a strong legislative liaison for NETRA, spearheading our efforts to reopen Miles Standish State Forest (MA) and protecting our trails in Freetown S.F. from anti-access efforts. Greylock Rider Scott Smith participated in eight work parties in Savoy S.F.

Three additional Trail Maintenance Champions are receiving \$200 certificates towards the purchase of any new KTM motorcycle, plus an AGV Advanced Composite helmet. Jason Ledellaytner of the Pathfinders MC participated in six work parties, including those at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Recreational Area at Thomaston Dam (CT) and the Berkshire Trails Council work parties in Beartown State Forest (MA). Clovis Bouchard of WestMass ATV participated in six Berkshire Trails Council work parties in

Pittsfield State Forest (MA), including operating heavy equipment. Jason Myers of the Berkshire Trail Riders participated in five Berkshire Trails Council work parties in Tolland State Forest (MA).

Five runner-ups are receiving KTM jackets: Fran Ouellette (WestMass ATV), Mike Bouchard (WestMass ATV), Ronnie & Barbara Morton (WestMass

Mass. Volunteers Make A Difference

In 2002, off-road motorcyclists and ATV riders performed 2257 man-hours of volunteer trail maintenance in seven Massachusetts state forests under contract with the Department of Environmental Management.

In western Massachusetts, the Berkshire Trails Council performed 1750 man-hours volunteer trail work under contract with the DEM in five state forests. The BTC is composed of the New England Trail Rider Assn, WestMass ATV, NEATV, and local NETRA clubs.

In Beartown State Forest, the Knox Trail Riders performed 346 man-hours of trail maintenance with help from the Pathfinders MC. In October Mountain S.F., NEATV provided 300 man-hours trail maintenance. In Pittsfield S.F., WestMass ATV provided 532 man-hours trail maintenance. The Berkshire Trail Riders put 417 man-hours of trail maintenance into Tolland S.F. 155 man-hours of work was performed by the Greylock Riders in Savoy S.F.

In eastern Massachusetts, Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders performed 356 man-hours work in Freetown S.F., and the King Philip Trail Riders provided 151 man-hours of trail maintenance in Wrentham and F. Gilbert Hills S.F.

This trail work has included building bridges, installing waterbars to prevent erosion, building causeways through muddy areas which are undrainable, cutting and cleaning out drainage ditches, clearing blow-downs, cutting new trails under DEM direction, and regrading/graveling eroded sections. Lumber and supplies were paid for by the DEM.

NETRA riders Mike Stone, Mark Bettencourt, and Steve Zdon provided the DEM with ten Trail Patrol Reports in seven months. The BTC and Pilgrim Sands TR also set up Trail Info booths with trail maps, trail rules, and ORV registration info at ORV parking areas on several busy spring and summer weekends.

Since 1996, the BTC has performed 11,150 man-hours trail maintenance on 200 miles of ORV/multi-use trails in five state forests under contract with the Massachusetts DEM. Combining this work with that of the Pilgrim Sands T.R. and King Philip T.R., ORVers have performed 14,757 man-hours of trail maintenance under contract with the Massachusetts DEM in seven state forests since 1996.

Where to Ride

- 3/2 SETRA Sandlapper Enduro
- 3/4 GNCC Palatka, FL
- 3/6 Alligator Enduro (Daytona, FL)
- 3/9 ECEA Snowball Hare Scrambles
- 3/9 Georgia GNCC
- 3/16 Georgia National Enduro
- 3/23 North Carolina GNCC
- 3/16 Curly Fern Enduro
- 3/23 Sandy Lane Enduro
- 3/30 Bear Valley Hare Scrambles

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ATV), and Corey Zdon (Greylock Riders).

All told, over 300 ORV enthusiasts contributed over 600 days of volunteer labor to maintain ORV/multipurpose trails on public land in New England under this program.

NETRA Director and KTM rep Dan Salamone secured the KTM certificates and jackets. NETRA VP Mike Stone secured the AGV helmets through [www. TMS-Electronics.com](http://www.TMS-Electronics.com) (the Outlaws of Car Stereo) and www.OutlawBicycles.com.

The Clam's Out Of The Bag

Well, it's finally out in the open, the press has it, the best kept secret in the dirt riding world: Our resident expert on anything that concerns trail riding and seafood, Gordie Coyle, has been researching these tiny crustaceans for years. During his vast research he has discovered that these little critters are sexually stimulated only by the roar of an over-400cc thumper combined with the vibrations generated by a new set of Dunlop D755s. Being an avid environmentalist, Coyle has tried to unite local riders into doing their share to help these little mollusks procreate.

The fact that these little fellows only exist in puddles created by dirt bikes (not cars, trucks, quads or equestrian hoof prints) puts the burden on the trail

riding community to keep them off the endangered species list. Coyle stated that he is currently working with the Massachusetts DEM to open up all Massachusetts trails to help in this venture.

The state now plans on implementing a licensing program for the harvesting of these small clam-shrimp. Their theory is that it shouldn't take very long to begin to mass produce these food delicacies once they open up all the trails in all the state parks to all the dirt riders they can find. This would allow for more breeding areas to be set up. Then, once the population has reached its peak they will shut down all areas to trail riding again so that they can harvest and market these new morsels.

Massachusetts hopes that this newly found clam-shrimp species will appeal to the public and take some of the pressure off of the depleted fishing stock at George's Bank. They seem to forget that they are just three-eighths of an inch long!

I have written the above tongue-in-cheek article in jest but it isn't that far off the mark with some of this state's knee-jerk reactions they have had in the past. In truth, what will actually happen is that these freaks of nature will be another reason to shut us out of the forests.

Have you ever noticed that most endangered species migrate to motor-cycle trails? I have my own theory on this. They sense that we are the only

group they can peacefully co-exist with. Like them, all we need is to be left alone and allowed to do our own thing. While I am on theories, I have another. I suspect that this entire clam-shrimp species are mutants caused by leaking fork seals on early 70's Yamaha DT-1's. In those early days of trail riding the Japanese filled their fork tubes with what was obviously fish oil. (The remaining fins constantly clogged the valving.) Their not-too-efficient fork seals guaranteed a generous amount of fish oil being spewed onto standing puddles; after 30 years I believe this oil has come full circle and is again ready to return to some unsuspecting rider's forks. (This is in response to a piece in the Troy Record (NY) about a new mullock discovered "only in puddles made by off-road vehicles").

New Dog in Town

Mansfield, MA: Dugas Engineering, makers of the WatchDog 2000 enduro computer have released a new off-road electronic device called the WatchDog XSC Cross-Sport-Computer.

The new multi purpose WatchDog XSC is perfect for riders who participate in dual sport events, turkey runs, commute on their dual sport bikes, or just fun ride. 16 programmable trips let you

keep track of all sorts of things like oil change intervals, event mileage, commuting mileage, etc. Trip names can be up to 8 characters in length and will accumulate mileages up to 65,000 miles each. Each trip can be individually enabled, disabled, reset, or deleted. Convenient riding displays allow you to view your odometer, speedometer, speed averages (over time and over distance), elapsed time, and riding time (when your speed is not zero) as well as other useful information. A general-purpose trip and clock allows you to quickly measure short distances and times.

The new WatchDog XSC utilizes the same rugged aluminum casing and thumbswitch, and the same power-stingy electronics as the WatchDog 2000, providing years of trouble-free operation. Made to withstand the toughest off-road riding.

For more information, contact Dugas at (508) 337-3132 or visit the website @ DugasEngineering.com. ↑



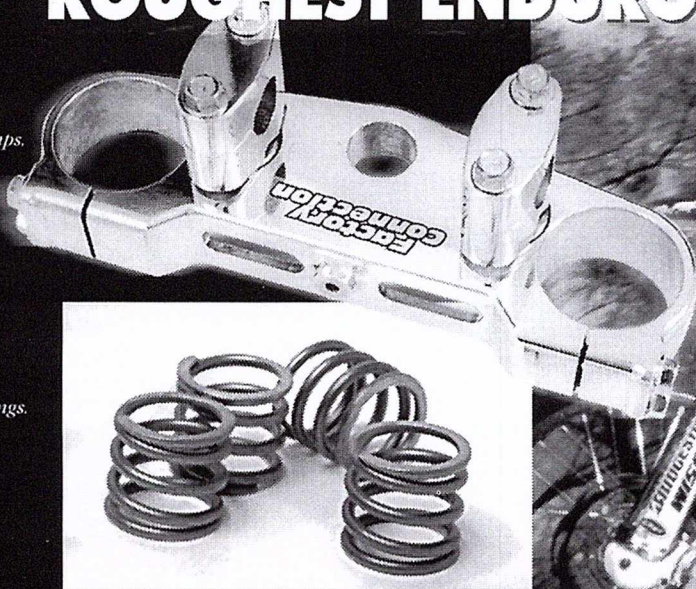
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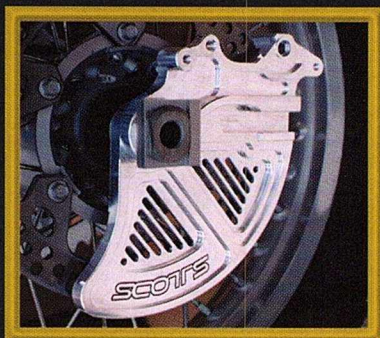
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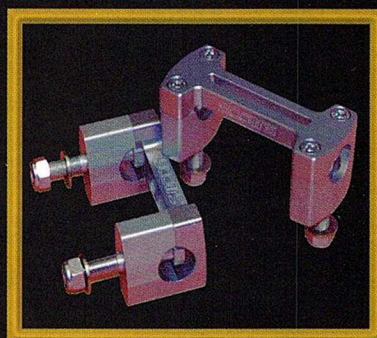
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Follow and Learn

The whole inspiration for this column came about one day when I was following a very famous, semi-retired racer whose name I won't mention to spare him embarrassment. We were committed to a long trail ride, and the last thing I wanted was the pressure of leading someone better than I through the woods, so whenever we started off again I dropped in behind and followed obediently, just happy to be riding behind a rider I really respected.

Now I warm up notoriously slowly. People think I'm joking when I say it takes me 50 miles at least to get warmed up, but it's true. And until I'm warmed up I ride like a fish. A lot of this is due to the fact that I simply don't ride as much as I used to—all sorts of things get into the way of getting on a bike, but that's a topic for another story.

So I'm riding like a novice behind this excellent rider, and getting more frustrated while I'm waiting for the two hours or so to go by until the juices start flowing. Nothing will make you feel more stupid than following someone who isn't making mistakes while you continue to screw up in every turn, so I hit on the idea that what I was going to do is try to clear out my mind, get on my riding partner's rear wheel, and just try to mimic everything he did.

It wasn't a new idea. A couple years back I was trying hard to learn telemark skiing, a really difficult, pointless exercise (but fun!) where you use special skis with no heel binding, and you turn by dropping your uphill knee sometimes as low as actually touching the topsheet of the ski. It feels and looks beautiful if you do everything right, but there are probably a dozen different critical points to remember every time you drop into a turn. The guy I was learning from was losing patience with me, until he finally said "Okay, don't think about it any more, just follow right in my ski tracks, watch me, and try to do everything I do without thinking so much about it."

So rather than struggle along trying to remember everything I'd half-learned, I went into autopilot mode and just tried to mimic everything my buddy was doing. And it worked. I watched real close, and when he twitched, I twitched. When he turned a knee to the left, I turned a knee to the left. Without analyzing everything to death I was training muscle memory alone to just do things right and stop fighting it. To this day I'm a better skier for it, and when I feel all knees and elbows on the slopes I go right back into follow mode for a couple of runs, and it always brings back subtle things I'd forgotten.

Until this time out, I'd never considered following someone on a dirt bike and watching that close, but it made perfect sense. In this case the rider I was following wasn't in a particular hurry because it wasn't a race, so the pace wasn't killer. He's still a good rider, and he still moves along faster than most people, so in the beginning the pace was a little quicker than I would have liked, but then again I know I'm a decent

rider once I get going, so I wasn't worried about risking injury. I wasn't concerned about looking like a fool to him because he couldn't see me; as far as he knew I was just finally keeping up with him. And, if my luck held out, I wouldn't look stupid to anyone else because if I did it right I'd pass them the same way he did, which would make me look like an equal rider. Yay!

So I dropped in behind, got up pretty close, and

about the second day!).

2. Always stand up. He stayed upright most of the time, conserving energy, and then if a turn came up he would do one of many different things. If it was a very gentle turn, I could see that he would lean the bike into the turn by shifting his weight to the inside peg and pushing down on the inside handlebar, changing nothing else. If it was more of a noticeable turn, he would crouch down into an attack position and turn

the bike with a combination of lean and slight counter-steering of the handlebars (where you initiate the turn by pushing the inside handlebar grip, which actually turns the front wheel away from the direction of the turn and causes the bike to fall to the inside, decreasing the radius of the turn. You may not realize this, but you do it hundreds of times every time you go riding). If it was a right angle turn or greater he would drop his butt to the seat, stick out the inside foot and go around it like a classic motocrosser, and then he would:

3. Always stand up. I was starting to get the message about this time. The reason I had so much trouble beginning a ride was because I was lazy, and I'd start out creaky and full of coffee with my behind firmly planted on plastic. And more than anything else this following drill was pointing out to me that dirt bikes just don't work when you're sitting on them. Sitting is something you do on a bar stool, or on the couch at night, or when you're working at your desk. When you're riding, you shouldn't be sitting.

Of course, lots of other subtle stuff came out of following and watching; lots of little balance and weight-shift nuances that I picked up on. But the overall revelation was being able to see just exactly how relaxed and loose this rider was, all the time, on the bike. The terrain would change but his attitude wouldn't—rocks, mud, loam, uphill, downhill, whatever we rode on, he was loose and in control, and I tried to make that attitude a part of my riding ever since, and it really helped.

So what to do next? Easy. Everybody rides in a group, and everybody has somebody who rides better than they do. Take a day and pick out your "teacher" on the next ride, and plead with him to keep the pace down so you can stay behind him. Most of the time, the bigger the group the more the fast leader is going to let ego take over and try to break away from the group. If you're trying to learn something from him, you don't want this to happen because you're taking a big risk of hurting yourself if you truly don't know what you're doing. It's best if you can arrange it to just ride one-on-one with a better rider so that the mob instinct doesn't take over. Just get up close behind, try not to think too much about what you're doing, and copy his every move.

And if I can offer one tip to get you started, something I learned after years and years of doing it wrong, it's this: Always stand up. ↑



You could learn a lot by following a rider like Matt Stavish, by golly. Yes, I know he's not standing, but he's coming out of a turn, give the guy a break!

started watching and studying riding positions, and I learned a lot. To wit:

1. Always stand up. He stood the entire time, most of the time bolt upright in a relaxed position. His arms were hanging straight down with his hands loosely on the grips, his head was up over the triple clamps. In this position, I found, my back was relaxed, my shoulders were relaxed, and my legs had the minimum amount of strain on them. It dawned on me that this was a perfect position to conserve energy for a long, long ride, in this case, a two day ride (always think

RACING IN A WINTER WONDERLAND

PSTR's Short-Course Scrambles is a great way to pass those cold winter Sundays

There was a time when "Members Only" showed up embroidered on high-end jackets, but for the last three years it has shown up again in flyers from Pilgrim Sands touting their Winter Series Short Course Scrambles.

The question left the most on my answering machine and on the club web page is, "What are those short course events?" The best answer would be to say that it is probably what you would get if you crossed moto-x with hare scrambles.

The races start at 8:30 a.m. with the Juniors, Minis and Women; each class leaving at 30 second intervals. They run a 30 minute (moto) heat. At 9:10 a.m., 40 minutes after the start of heat #1, the "C" class leaves the line in four waves: C-Light, 0-249 cc; C-Heavy, 250+cc; C-Vet, 30-39 year olds; and C-Senior, 40 years and older. Heat #3 is the same only for "B" riders and heat #4 is for "A" riders.

Heat #5 brings back the Juniors, Minis and Women; then the entire procedure repeats itself. This means 30 minute heats with a new race going off every 40 minutes. The scores are compiled from the finishes in both heats (MX scoring) with ties being broken by the



best last-heat finish.

The trophies (three per class) are awarded from the heat. As a bonus the top five riders in each class in each ability group (A-B-C) qualify to enter one of our three grand prix races.

The format for the grand prix are simple, all riders leave on one line. The scoring barrels are removed and entrants race for another 30 minutes. In this last event only one trophy is given (equivalent to overall). On top of all this, Pat and Dave Bettencourt, of Bettencourt's Honda/Suzuki, have established "Bettencourt's Dash for Cash." A line is established off of the start and the first rider to reach this line receives a \$50 cash award.

Now we get to the "members only" part. In order to enter these events you must belong to Pilgrim Sands Trail Riders. (Dues are \$20 per year.) The entry fee per event is \$20 for Juniors, Minis and Women and \$25 for A,B,C classes. Each rider may enter one additional class for \$15.

Points are tallied throughout the season and awards are given at the end. Points are tallied as follows: First place equals 10 points, tenth place equals one point,

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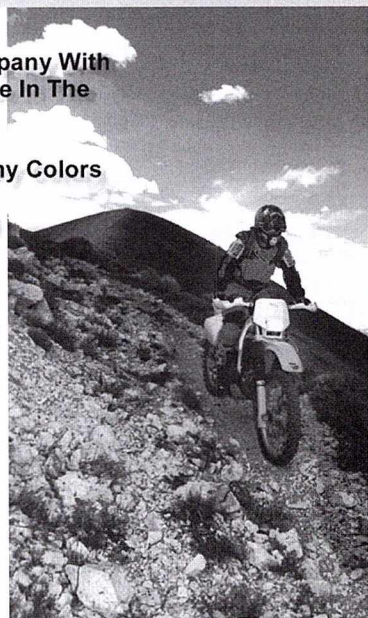
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with a one point bonus for a grand prix winner. The number of awards given out will be determined by the number of entries in each class. Last year we awarded about 40 jackets at the banquet.

The purpose of this series is to keep the riders interested going all winter long. Don't put your bike away! Stud it up and come racing. This series might even help the dealers with their mid-winter blahs. Think of all the tires and parts they will be selling.

There are no work requirements, no throw aways, not many rules, separate A,B and C class championships and inexpensive racing. Try it, you might like it!

This year we are lucky to have the following sponsors supporting our series: Bettencourt's Honda/Suzuki, Brockton Cycle Center, Cape Cod's Dave's Carpentry, Simcock's Farm, Long Island's George Poulos (the world's most intense C Senior racer), Armand's Power Sports, Cycle Connection,

Gary's Street and Trail, and BMD Trucking.

These events all take place in Freetown, MA, on six different courses at two different locations. The courses are all one and half to two miles in length, half grass track and half typical hare scramble "snot." It also has some tight, down-to-the-wire racing in every class. At any given event you may see a heads-up battle between MX ace Keith Johnson and Six Day rider Luke McNeil or wheel to wheel duels with Bob Santheson, Drew Carpenter and Scott DeCosta all trying to reach that "Dash for Cash" line first.

You might also catch a glimpse of JoJo Keller thrashing a CR450F or road racer Jeff Wood leading the way riding his four-stroke Yamaha. We have been averaging 100-plus riders with many of them being NETRA regulars.

I know this whole process sounds pretty intense, but it is actually very simple. All you have to do is show up, join PSTR, go fast and go through the prop-



er barrel; we do the rest. And, on the bright side, you will belong to the best damn trail riding club in New England and be privy to the best club racing around.

I am sending this article in myself because for two years that Clipper fella has been going to cover one of our events, but he seems to have this abnormal fear of traveling north in winter. For information on the winter series (there are three more events) call Gordie at 781-294-8355 or check our web page at www.PSTR.org. ↑

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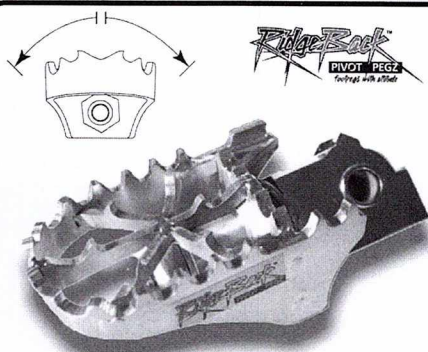
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ENDURO STRATEGY

A handful of things to get you into the mood for your first enduro this year

Spring means wild flowers, the smell of warming woods, and droves of confused enduro riders wallowing in the trees. Maybe this year will be the first time you ride an enduro. Good luck; read this afterwards and maybe it'll make a little sense. If this is the second year you've ridden enduros, and you've already tried your hand at timekeeping, maybe you'll get something out of this story. This is a breakdown of the things I think about and the techniques I use in enduros, and though it hasn't resulted in a riding career so successful as to allow me to quit my day job, I usually don't feel like a fool with a scorecard on my front fender. Usually.

And, if you're an old pro maybe you'll get a laugh out of this. I wrote it to help out some C rider friends of mine, so figure accordingly.

Anyhow, I'm a proponent of timekeeping, or at least learning how to timekeep,



with a watch, a roll chart, and a odo. Using these three basic tools forces you to think and actually teaches you something about timekeeping, since you have to figure out how to overcome all the mistakes you make. Computers work great, but if you don't know a thing about timekeeping you are completely lost if the computer stops working, something they tend to do at the worst times possible. If you're already an expert timekeeper when you get a computer you can at least come up with a recovery strategy when the computer fails for some reason. And it WILL fail eventually.

Going the cheap route, you can build your timekeeping system on parts easily available at auto parts stores and your local dealership. You should get a watch that shows seconds LARGE. I bought two car clocks at CarQuest for \$4.95 each and mounted them inside a

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homemade Plexiglas cover. Setting them is another matter entirely. Let's say you are on minute 27 and the keytime clock says 6:46. What time do you want to set your clock for? See what I mean? I started setting the seconds clock at the keytime clock and the minutes clock on the starting line. Made for easier fingerin'.

But this story isn't about the mechanics of time-keeping, this is about strategy, what to do in the woods. Let's pick up in the middle of the game. You already know you can pin it off the start for three miles unless they throw in a 2.9 mile reset 50 feet off the start.

You are tooling along some road in an 18 mph section doing the easy part. You want to check in at :01 (seconds) if you can, that way you get a 15 to 59 second head start over the average bonehead C guys. Your roll chart says 23.2+ LWI, the next possible is at 23.4 at 34:00 (minutes). Slow down, make the turn onto the trail at about 33:00 and 40 to 50 seconds depending on how far you can see into the woods. Keep looking for the check crews and/or flags. Remember, some clubs go as far as to wear camo and jump out of the woods to burn you so watch for those signs or flags. Plunk along carefully until about 55 seconds then speed up a bit. The instant your clock crosses :00 you can't burn the check, wick it up and go hunting for the next possible at 23.7 at 35:00.

Zip along until 23.6, slow down, watch the clock. Say you are at 45 seconds and you see the check ahead—don't put your feet down. Slow down, trials ride a bit, watch the seconds and gauge your distance, don't pay any frigging attention to the morons in the check trying to wave you in. When your clock crosses :00 you should hear the guy in the check shout "Thirty-FIVE!" Boom, wick it in, don't kill any check guys, get your card marked. Watch what number they put on the card, beer is usually consumed at checks in great quantities. Make a mental note, next possible is at 26.7, because there can't be a check, according to AMA rules, for three miles after a check. You'll probably be late, but make a quick mental calculation or spin the roll chart to find out what minute should be up a couple miles down the trail. When you get there check your time to see if you are late or hot.

Make a mental note of the "B" or "A" guys on the minutes before and after you. They know how to keep time. Don't pass the guy in front of you if he knows what he's doing. If you catch and re-pass the guy on the minute after you, slow down in a half mile or so and take a peek at your time/miles chart, you are probably getting close to being on time. A skilled enduro rider will be running 15 to 30 seconds hot depending on the terrain—don't assume you have a full 60 seconds to make up.

Ride with someone your skill level or a little faster. Never let him get away, or if he does disappear imagine he is only two corners away and you NEED to catch him. Assume the guy coming up behind you is the guy on your minute you just passed and do your best to stay motivated and ahead of him. If it is someone from the minute(s) behind you, they are WAY

faster than you, so get the hell out of the way. (A minute in the woods is an eternity. If they caught you from 60 seconds back they are the more skilled rider.) Don't pull over too early, listen for how fast they are catching you and let them pass someplace safe that won't cost you too much time. You are racing too but you don't want to hold him up either. Some guys are just pricks, no matter how accommodating you try to

be they aren't happy. Don't let that get into your head.

General Rules of Engagement:

NEVER pass up an opportunity to correct your odo unless it just needs a little correcting and you are in a section where you are clearly racing—i.e., you are late.

WATCH for those resets. The club is likely to throw a weird one in to make you hot and you won't even

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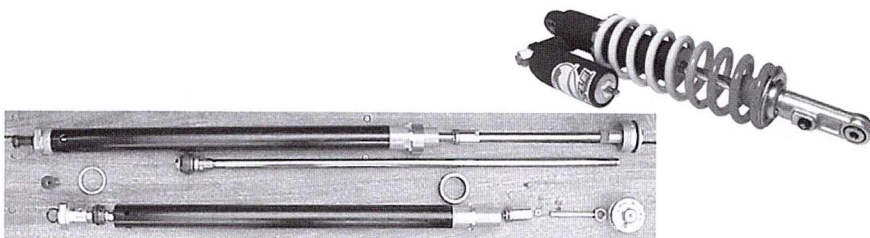
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ASSUME the club is trying to burn you.

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ALWAYS know where the next turn is when on the pavement or dirt roads. Arrows have a habit of disappearing when the bunny huggers are about. If you know there is a turn at 35.6+, start looking for it at 35.4.

ADAPT. The club can make last minute changes in the course and suddenly there are resets you didn't count on. The roll chart will still be numerically correct. Make the reset and continue on.

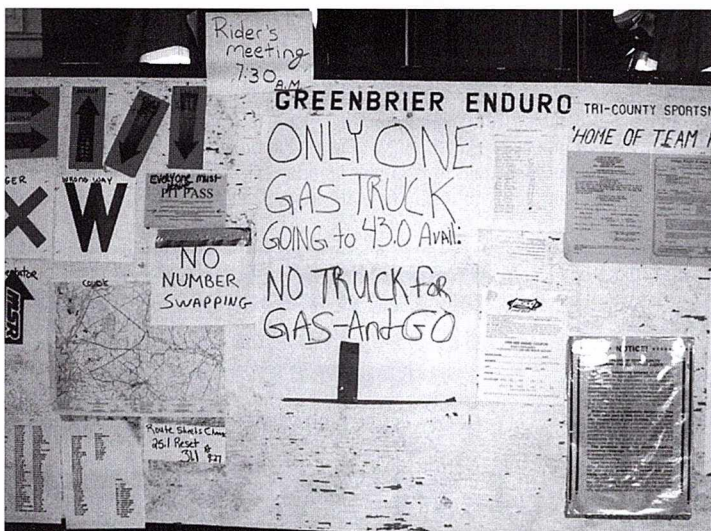
STAY ALERT. Just because 60 guys blew a turn in the woods due to a missing arrow doesn't mean you need to also. If you see ribbon on the ground it's a pretty good bet someone blew a major turn and snapped it off. Look for the trail you should be on and watch for those wrong-way "W's."

DON'T PANIC. Some clubs won't put up a whole lot of arrows in a section where you can't really get lost.

RELAX and get through a section in one piece. Don't go ballistic in a dangerous section. It costs a whole lot more time and energy to crash and pick the bike up than slow down and negotiate something nasty safely. You will get an adrenaline rush while racing, don't let it dictate your behavior. Relax and control it and it will be an advantage.

USE THE FORCE, relax and rest at every opportunity, know exactly how much you need to hold onto the bars, know when you need to use your legs to grip and when you can relax.

VISUALIZE and have CONFIDENCE. A really nasty



log with nasty grease-covered rocks after it will cause you to pucker, if you know what I mean. See yourself skipping across the tops of the rocks and on the other side of the log, and the chances it will happen go up 1000 percent. Look down, freak yourself out, get scared of the pain of a compound fracture cutting through your riding pants when the bike lands on you, and the chances of that happening go up 1000 percent.

MAINTAIN MOMENTUM. You won't be able to do five or six 30 minute motos. Maintain corner speed even if it means slowing down a little early to negotiate it at something you are comfortable with. Screaming into a corner hell-bent-for-leather, slamming on the binders, and using a tree to ricochet off into the sunset WFO works for the AA guys. It doesn't

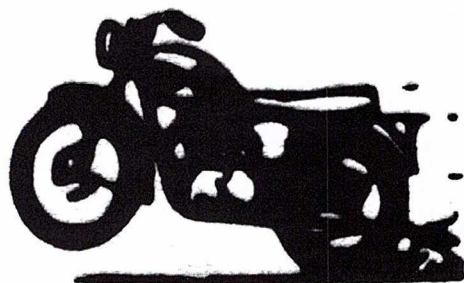
work for too long for a 40 year old "C" guy.

BE CREATIVE. A motorcycle laying on its side in the middle of a greasy hill makes for great traction. I'm not saying run over his motor, but if the knucklehead is sitting on the side of the trail resting, go ahead and use his tires for traction. Don't be afraid to leave the trail to keep forward momentum. If it looks negotiable, keep going even if it is off the trail. Being at the top of the hill in the wrong spot is way better than floundering in the middle of the hill and having someone use your bike for traction, or having some adrenaline-pumped bonehead smack your elbow with his bark buster.

DON'T STOP. No matter how tired you are, keep the wheels moving. Sit if you must, but don't stop. Minutes tick away real fast when stopped. When you are moving, it will really only take a minute or two to get your wind back and now you are a few tenths further down the trail than if you had stopped. ★

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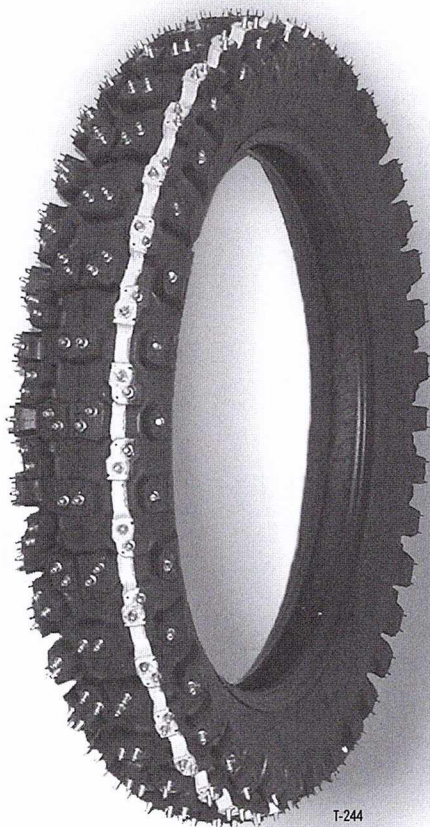
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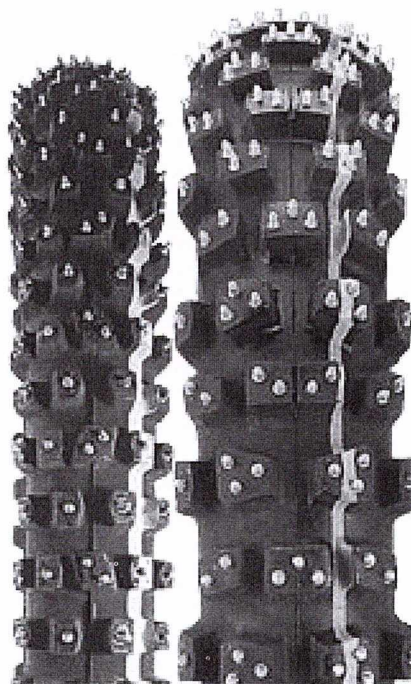
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PERUVIAN KICK TURNS

Revisiting the land of the Ancients

A couple of years ago I had the opportunity to go on a dual sport ride with the gang from Lotus Tours to Peru, South America. During our trip we rode Honda XR600s and had a support truck follow us carrying our gear and spare parts. Getting to Peru was easy, a \$525 ticket and an eight hour flight south; so there was no time change, but there was a major climate change. Peru lies near the equator but has been described as having "the coldest hottest driest wet weather in the world." Altitude kept the weather lively and we rode from broiling sun all the way up to snow storms.

At one point I was riding along a 100 foot tall cliff overlooking the Pacific Ocean on one side and the vast Ica desert on the other. The Ica desert was a surreal place. Vast and trackless gigantic sand dunes roll out forever. The tallest stand nearly 3000 feet, and the ones we were riding on were 1000 feet tall. Our Peruvian guide, Flavio Salvetti, was leading our small group of five riders. Flavio is an expert rider and has won many prizes in the Acerbis Incas Rally. That is always one of the concerns when going on a guided tour, will we really get to ride the bikes? Or will the guide stand there wringing his hands together saying "Don't, don't, don't!" Flavio was letting us really ride the bikes and this was a magical place to be riding.

The Ica Desert had not seen rain for 26 years, so there is not one bit of grass or scrub brush. The dunes here were very firm and easy to ride on, not all soft and sugary like at home. There were no stones or rocks, just hard packed sand as far as the eye could see. We were charging up the dunes in top gear then plunging down the other side. You could ride blindfolded here.

Possibly the greatest sensation was to charge up one of the hills in fourth gear, the big bike would just strain and wallow. Downshift under full power and when that gear ran down you were hundreds of feet up the steep, featureless dune. Lay the bike into a hard turn and with the steepness of the hill you could feel like you were upside down. Just as you reached stall speed, plant your heel, pull up on the bars and point back down the hill with the front wheel off the ground. Quickly kick the shifter up two gears with your heel and hold it wide open for a free fall of several hundred feet and at a speed of whatever an XR600 will run, wide open down a steep hill. At first your weight is way up over the bars and your inside foot is still dangling from its turning and shifting duties. I looked just like Tallon Volland, except fat. As speed built you would transfer your weight back over the rear fender laying flat over the tank and bars. Now I looked just like Scott Summers, except fat. When you finally reached the bottom and ran out across the valley floor, the G forces were incredible and I was all mashed down and looked just like Scotty Parker all tucked in at 130 mph, except fat. Over and over until I looked like a kid at the water slide park. Yes, a big fat kid. This day ended way too soon.

Our evenings were spent in the town's finest restaurants enjoying delicious Peruvian food. Beef and chicken with rice and potatoes, everything was very good and I never had any problems as far as intestinal tract flushing. Guinea pig was on the menu, and they were running loose in the restaurant. One place for lunch we got a big plate of goulash-looking stuff and the guinea pigs were running over our feet. It was pretty funny but the food was very good.



Another day crossing the desert there were little mounds of sand everywhere. Now the XR is not a supercrosser, but these little mounds were only two feet tall. From a distance you could see around them and make sure there wasn't a big rock behind them. They made great jumps! My French riding companion and I were jumping around like we were Super Mario Brothers. I stepped one jump off to be 75 feet and I was only three feet off the ground, really fun.

Later that same day we rode back to the ocean's edge. We needed to follow the beach south for 15 miles. The tide was very high and only left us a narrow beach to ride on. The sand was deep and soft and it took all the power the mighty XR had just to keep going. I held it wide open in third gear for 15 miles! Had you bobbed and gotten stuck there was no saving you. I just knew the big bike was going to give up and seize at any minute but it just kept pulling, a true torture test.

Our ultimate destination on this tour were the remains of an ancient Inca village known as Machu Piccu. To get there we had to cross the desert, go over the Andes mountains, and plunge deep into the Amazon jungle. We rode 1,200 miles in a two week time period. We only had minor problems with the

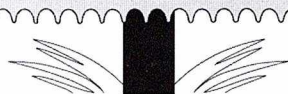
bikes and our guide Flavio was able to fix everything we twisted. Our evenings were spent in the finest hotels the villages had. One night high in the mountains Flavio gave us the choice of camping out in the rain or staying in the town's hotel. We took a look at the hotel and unanimously voted "Camping!" It reminded me of the Turkish prison in Midnight Express. But for every other night our lodging was just fine and the clean starched sheets felt good against our skin after riding all day.

Buried deep under jungle vegetation high on a mountain top for hundreds of years, explorer Hiram Bingham rediscovered the remains of Machu Piccu in 1909. Completely grown over, it was barely recognizable and now they have an army of 50 men who keep the jungle cut away so we can enjoy the sights. Boy what a sight. This ancient village sits right on top of a mountain with a panoramic 360 degree view of the valleys below. The mountain slopes are terraced for farming, and viaducts divert water to the Incas' needs.

The Inca people were famous for their stone working skills and some of their finest work is here in Machu Piccu. In the Sun Palace there is a stone that was cut to fit perfectly on its 32 sides. This may not sound like much but next time you are doodling away at your desk, sketch a 32 sided stone. Then think about all the work the craftsman had to do, by hand. First he had to quarry the stone and move it to its resting place. A monumental feat in itself. Then, without steel tools, he had to chip and chisel the stone using nothing but harder stones and manpower. A small stone was estimated to take a man one month to complete. The 32 sided stone was an engineering marvel.

To look back down this mountain, down the river, back across the desert to the ocean I am reminded how mystical a place and what a wonderful place Peru is to ride bikes. I have to recommend this trip to every one of you. A thousand other things happened on this journey that there is not room for here, but the important information is. Lotus Tours is located in Chicago, Illinois. Lotus guides luxury motorcycle tours all over the world and they can be reached at 312-951-0031. They have a beautiful brochure you should call and request. Or check out their web site at <http://www.lotustours.com>. ♦

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SUPER DUAL DI

Making the pulular Suzuki into a killer dual sport. Part One: Deconstructing the DRZ

Sometimes it takes a while to get around to reviewing a bike. In the case of this 2001 DRZ400e it is actually going to take a transformation to provoke a review. In just a few weeks time this bike is going to begin the journey from mild-mannered trail bike to mild-mannered long distance dual-sport machine. Before we talk about the bike in its future condition, let's talk about the bike as it is now. This is a well-used machine that has just a few aftermarket parts to make it rideable. It is a reliable machine that has been problem free for about 1000 off-road miles.

Suzuki put a lot of technology in its new-for-2000 DRZ line. The original lineup consisted of two off-road bikes, one electric start, one kick, and one dual sport machine. We rode the DRZ "S" model in a 1500-mile dual sport journey in 2000 and were impressed by the overall package even though it was a slug with a soft spot in the jetting. In general though, the 400cc dual overhead cam motor is every bit as high tech as the Yamaha and Honda bikes. Despite the engine having the statistics of a motocrosser, Suzuki definitely focused this bike on the trail market. The bike is heavy (about 275 pounds dry) and is sprung softly.

Technical Stuff

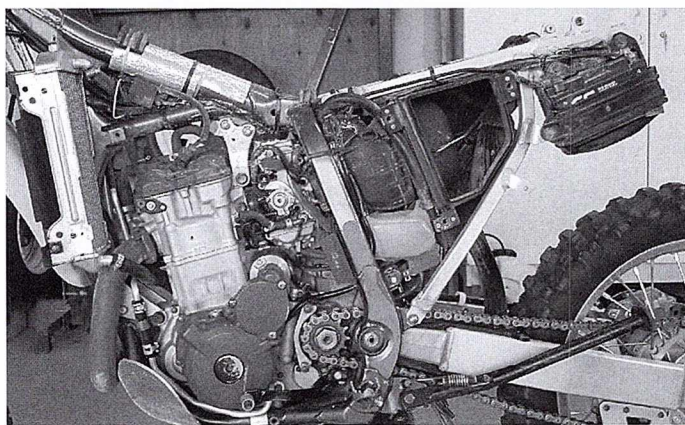
The motor is a dry sump, which means it hold oil in the frame. This is great for a trail bike. The more oil the better. The valves are shim and bucket like the YZF's and most modern DOHC street bikes. The valves do require adjustment after about 1500 miles, and then at maybe 5000 mile intervals thereafter. The left intake valve seems to require the most adjustment and has been rumored to get beyond clearance after heavy usage.

The FCR 39 carb on the E and kick models is similar to the YZF and CRF. It has an enrichening circuit on the left hand-side of the carb that is supposed to prevent backfiring on deceleration. Thumper Racing makes a kit to eliminate this extra circuitry if desired.

The E model has no kickstarter. At first this was very scary to us, as we could see ourselves stranded out in the middle of the woods after drowning the bike in a river. Well, we've put a bunch of miles on the bike, and the original battery seems to be holding strong. We keep in on a Battery Tender when it is parked for more than a few days and this seems to help keep it in tip-top shape. A kickstarter kit is available for those who don't feel comfortable without one, but I guess we are the risky types. It will probably only take one ride



Huck it off a cliff? Well, a small cliff every now and then. We're going to be looking into finding suspension improvements for the DRZ as well as street legal gear.



There's a lot of parts inside that DRZ frame, but not a whole lot you can remove to lose weight. It would be great to find a place to relocate the battery, but you'd probably need a new airbox to find a place to hide it. Below: Our bike has a few miles on it, but we like to think of it as just being thoroughly broken-in.



with a dead battery to convince us to get the kick-starter kit.

The forks on the E model are basically RM leftovers from the late 90's. These are great woods forks. They use 49mm fork tubes so they provide enough stiffness with the flex required to keep a smoother feel in the choppy stuff. In addition, since these forks were used on the Suzuki motocross bikes for three years, there are plenty of people who can provide excellent suspension service.

The shock is similar to Showa units on comparable models. The biggest difference between the DRZ shock and the RM shock is that the DRZ shock body is not hard anodized on the inside. This means that the shock oil contaminates quickly and the shock bore can wear prematurely. If you send the suspension off to be revalved, spend the \$50 and have the shock body hard-anodized while the shock is still new. Most suspension shops can get this done, and it really helps longevity.

The stock exhaust on the DRZe is surprisingly quiet.

It is heavy like all stock steel four-stroke exhausts, but it works well. It is nice to see a company spend the time to put a decent performing, quiet exhaust on their woods bikes. Yamaha has ignored this problem altogether with their WRF products. The aftermarket DRZe exhausts can make the engine peppier over the entire RPM range, but the bike begins to bark like all other large bore four strokes. For now we'll stick with the stocker.

Changing Stuff

A few things need to be done to a stock DRZe to make it woods worthy.

Snorkel: Like all bikes shipped with a restrictor on the intake, take this thing out and huck it at the groundhog in the back yard. Seeing the intake choked down to the diameter of a toothpick makes you wonder how these bikes can run at all.

Skid Plate: The ignition case on the DRZe is made out of paper mache. It is so thin that the slightest contact with a rock will cause a nice hole and result in a trail of oil about 3/4 of the way back to the truck, and then stop right before the engine seizes. Make sure you find a skid plate that covers both the ignition side and the water pump on the clutch side. We've been using a skid plate from BajaDesigns that seems to provide good coverage.

Top Clamp: Unless you sang about the lollipop kids in the Wizard of Oz, you are going to feel cramped in the DRZ cockpit. Applied Racing makes a top triple clamp that moves the handlebars about 10mm forward. That coupled with a CR-Hi bend Protaper handlebar really begins to make

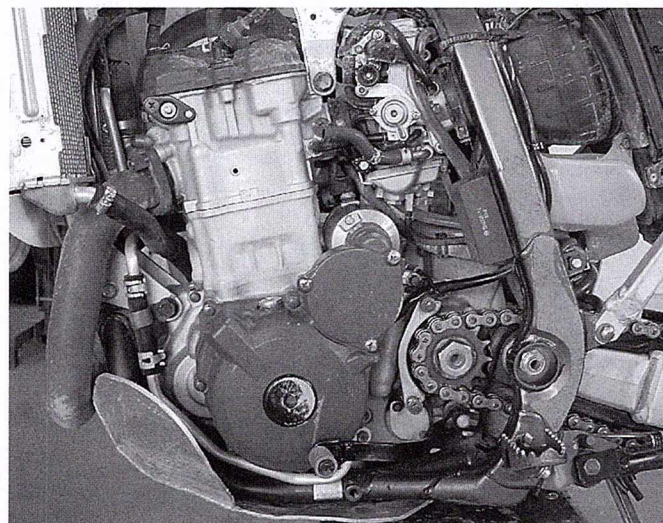
DRZ

the bike feel comfortable. It was difficult to stand up and move your body forward with the stock configuration.

Disconnect Clutch Switch: The safety group at Suzuki felt that it would be dangerous to allow the users to engage the starter without pulling in the clutch lever. This is just an extra nuisance and more wiring to get pinched in a meeting with a tree. Fortunately the switch is easily removable and can be unplugged from the wiring harness. The two leads remaining in the harness can be plugged back together. Interesting, it is almost as if they planned for the switch to be removed.

Long Shifter Arm: Again back to the lollipop kids, the stock shifter is about one inch too short for anyone with a foot bigger than a size 8. We are using a Baja Designs extended shifter that makes it easy for our size 10s to make the gearbox sing.

Seat Cover: The seat on the DRZ is noticeably tilted toward the back of the bike. On steep uphill we found it difficult to stay forward on the bike. A grippy seat from Ceet solved that problem.



Hand Guards: No need to justify these!

Carb Jetting: After the snorkel is removed, it is important to jet the DRZ. Usually a change to the main jet should be enough, although the pilot may also have to be changed. We just had to go two sizes bigger on the main jet.

Rear taillight: We thought it looked faster without the taillight, so it was removed. We're looking for speed wherever we can.

So what's it like?

As you can see, the bike we have has quite a few miles on it. The bike looks the way it does because it is a great, albeit well-used, trail bike. It does everything well and hides its weight fairly well once under

way. In a way it kind of works like the old XR600. The XRs looked and felt like beasts when you were moving them around the garage, but when you got out onto the trail they actually moved along quite well.

Some things are not perfect, though. When you first get on the DRZe and start to motor along some tight single-track, you find that the front end feels very light. It almost feels like the front end is disconnected from the ground. We played with the front end and found out that 5mm more fluid in the forks and dropping them 5mm in the clamps made a big difference.

Both the front and rear suspension do a good job of soaking up the bumps. The forks, however, are horrible on square edge hits. We played with the damping to try to fix this, but could not find a setting that made a big difference. By dialing out the compression we could get it to almost go away, but then the damping went away also...not so good. We found the middle ground and realized we'd have to live with the square-edge problem until we gave the suspension some internal attention. The springs are about right for a 185 pound rider cruising through the woods, but a faster rider will want to go stiffer in the front and rear.

The engine on the DRZe is very smooth and very powerful.

Once we got the jetting figured out, the bike ran very cleanly. As described before, the carb has a coast enricher so that there is no backfiring when you roll off the throttle. This seems to work very well although it makes a mess out of the left side of the carb. The engine does not have the snap of a YZF, but it makes linear power all the way to the 10,000 RPM limit. Wheelies are available up to third gear for those who have that talent (not me).

The brakes on the DRZ are as good as the brakes on any modern off-road bike. The front brake required some break-in and rebleeding before it reached full potential, but now it is a two-finger stop every time. We've gotten both the front and rear brakes pretty hot



and have had no real problems with fade.

Overall

For most people this is not a dedicated race bike. It is a great trail bike that could easily be convinced go out to a race a few times a year. Think of it as a more powerful, liquid-cooled, electric start XR400. It has all of the goodies to make it perform well, and that electric start just makes it so easy to ride. No worries about cranking it over after a nasty spill. This is the part of the bike that makes the weight all worth while. This bike does not get the yearly updates like the YZF's and the CRF's get, but it is cheaper buy and own. In addition, a model year 2000 is virtually identical to a model year 2003, so shopping for a used bike is easy if that is what you are looking to buy.

The DRZe is made to be ridden, and once it is on the trail it really is a great machine. In the coming months we are hoping to make it better.

Better you say?

This bike has dual sport written all over it. It has a keyswitch and a high output lighting coil. We are planning on getting some lighting switchgear and a large tank and taking this beast on a few long weekends. Once we have the gear bolted on and a few hundred miles of off-road abuse, we'll post part two of this story so can see the results of the transformation. We're looking forward to it. We suspect that out in the bush the DRZe is going to be right at home.

-Phil Walker

pwalker@nextdimengineering.com

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Yamaha YZ450F

Is it a good woods bike, or is it Godzilla on a diet?

I'll have to admit, I wasn't exactly sure why Yamaha's new flagship super thumper showed up at the TR receiving dock. Large bore thumpers are enough of a handful in the trail, let alone closed-course models that make power like a nuclear chain reaction gone critical. And a four speed tranny? Surely you jest. You might say that we weren't quite salivating at the prospect of taking the YZF out into the woods, but soldier on we did. A challenge is a challenge, at least that is, once you've made peace with your keepers. In hindsight, I can now say that all our trepidation was unfounded. The fact is, the YZ450F is truly one amazing motorcycle, one that could well find a home in some startling places.

Right from the gitgo, we knew that Yamaha had made some serious changes to the big daddy YZF. After all, you could hardly miss that powerplant displacement had grown to 450cc. What we didn't realize was that the Yamaha engineers basically tore up the plans from the 426 and started with a clean tablet. The YZ450 bike has very little in common with last year's 426.

The largest beneficiary of this make-over is weight, the YZ450F having slimmed down to an amazing 222 pounds CDW (claimed dry weight). Of course, we all know that CDW isn't something to bet the farm on, but it does give us a reference point from which to compare. Try this on for size: Ten pounds less than

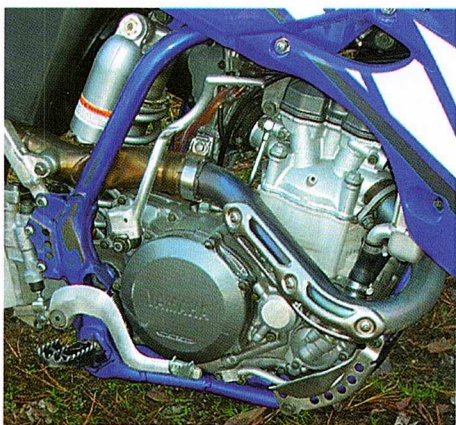
the '02 YZ426F; three pounds lighter than the '03 Honda CRF; six pounds lighter than the '03 KTM 450SX, 26 pounds less than the '03 WR450F; 16 pounds lighter than the '03 KTM 250EXC; and, only nine pounds heavier than an '03 Honda CR250R! Virtually all of the shed weight came out of the new 450cc powerplant. It is a completely new motor and it seems you'd be hard pressed to find any common parts between the 426 and the 450. The extra displacement was gained by stroking the motor, increased from 60.1mm to 63.4mm. However, most weight was lost by downsizing the head and cylinder. This impacts just about all of the parts contained within (e.g., crank, cams, piston, piston pin, valves, cam chain tensioner, etc.) and is accomplished in spite of adding the additional hardware that makes the automatic compression release work.





Our 450 test bike all rigged out for the woods, with Acerbic headlight, handguards, disc protector and taillight. Looks just like a WR doesn't it?

Speaking of starting, we're pleased to report that the new automatic compression release system works perfectly and eases starting duties considerably. The biggest question was, why didn't the YZF models always come with it? Of course with the auto compression release, the starting drill is reduced to a single step—kick, repeat. Despite its size, the kicking effort on the YZF is easily manageable, aided by a nice long kickstarter that seems to be just the right shape. Further simplifying starting chores is a trick clutch perch mounted hot start lever, eliminating the need to fiddle with carburetor mounted knobs while trying to fire up the beast. The hot start system is only open while the rider is holding the lever open, unlike the carburetor mounted knob which had to be manually closed. This eliminates the possibility of riding off with the hot start system engaged, not that we've ever done that.



Yamaha improved the suspension, and in our opinion made the YZ feel better in the woods. No holds were barred on the engine, with lower weight and much more horsepower as a reward.

Of course, despite all these new gadgets, the bottom line remains, how does it start? The answer is, pretty damn easily. Cold or hot, even without too much time aboard the bike (read: not too much familiarity with any quirks it might have), the YZ450F was as easy or easier a starter than any of the more known thumpers we have around the garage. Simply use the choke or hot start as needed and kick. Sure, like any thumpers there will be occasions where it'll make life difficult for you. However, those instances were a most rare occurrence during our time on it.

Which brings us to the transmission. Is it a four

speed cog box destined to stepchild status throughout its life? Acute gear-head envy? Admittedly, it's been a long time since we had ridden a four speed in the trail and quite frankly, we were mostly happy thinking that those experiences were behind us. No doubt the greatest difficulties with the stock YZ450F gearing is an astronomically tall first gear, near five percent taller than the 426 and a whopping 25% taller than the '03 WRF's granny gear. With stock final drive (14/48), it is extremely difficult to ride in

any type of technical terrain, simply because first gear just isn't low enough. The result is, despite a conscientious effort and considerable clutch abuse, repeated motor stalling.

At the other end of the spectrum things aren't quite as bad. Fourth gear on YZF is exactly same as fourth gear on the WRF (although WRF has 14/50 final drive) and by our reckoning, the YZF will still do near 65 MPH at 10,000 RPM in top gear. This is only a slight compromise from the 426. What the 450 has going for it is that it still has plenty enough juice to pull just about any gearing you might want to change to and the fact remains that for many, a close ratio transmission is spades in the trail. For our conditions, the upshot was that gearing needed some attention, which it got in the form of a 52 tooth rear sprocket. With this lower drive, the 450 seems to have the right

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gear-to-power combination that works surprisingly well in the woods. In hindsight, I might even opt for another tooth at the rear. And of course, the ace-in-the-hole is a motor that still revs like a over-spiced turbine.

Regarding suspension, I don't know. Are we getting more tolerant or are stock motorcycle suspensions really getting that much better? The YZ450F legs work surprisingly well right out of the box, even when trail ridden over technical obstacles at modest speeds. This is a supercross bike, for Gods sake. Why isn't the fork sprung for dropping off of tall buildings? Where's the uncontrollable skating across roots and logs? Beats me. The action wrought from the Kayaba 46mm USD fork and Kayaba shock mated to a traditional linkage-type rear suspension are amazingly smooth. We're sure that racers, coming in all shapes and sizes and generally being the finicky bunch that they are, will always look to improve suspension performance

with aftermarket valving. Even so, we're sure that plenty of riders are going to like it just fine as is.

Handling is pure Yamaha, a trait that we've become quite accustomed to of late. Perhaps contributing, the frame and swingarm have undergone some major refitting aimed at improving strength while reducing weight. In the saddle, the YZF turns well, is nicely balanced, and offers good stability both at speed and when carving a turn in rough terrain. Just hop on it and ride.

Overall the YZF remains a well trimmed machine, benefiting this year from new plastic all around. That includes a new fuel tank, shrouds, airbox side covers, and rear fender. Of potential concern, fuel capacity has been reduced to 1.8gal, down from 2.1 on the 426.

Regarding the new body work, the new airbox design is claimed to better seal out dirt and dust. Excel rims are shod with venerable Dunlop 739 meats that provide good hard to intermediate terrain perfor-



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Specifications 2003 Yamaha YZ450F

Bore x Stroke	95 x 63.4mm
Displacement	449cc
Type	L/C DOHC 4-Stroke
Carburetion	39mm Keihin FCR
Compression Ratio	12.5:1
Final Drive	#520 Chain
Ignition	Digital CDI
Transmission	4-speed
Brakes/Front	250mm floating disc
Brakes/Rear	245mm disc
Suspension/Front	46mm Kayaba 11.8" travel
Suspension/Rear	Kayaba, 12.4" travel
Tires/Front	80/100-21 Dunlop
Tires/Rear	110/90-19 Dunlop
Dry Weight	222 lbs.
Fuel Capacity	1.8 gallons
Ground Clearance	14.6"
Height	51.3"
Length	85.5"
Seat Height	39.2"
Wheelbase	58.5"
MSRP	\$6,299

mance. Braking action is top notch and the rear master cylinder has been redesigned to integrate the hydraulic reservoir into the master cylinder body. You'll find the right stuff in most every place you look, an alloy rear sprocket, alloy shifter and kickstarter and alloy subframe. Better yet, the head pipe is made from light (yet expensive) titanium, as are the silencer end-caps. Ergonomically, the top triple clamp has been redesigned, moving the handlebar position slightly forward. Yamaha is sticking to a conventional cable-actuated clutch mechanism, operated via Yamaha's own AOF (adjust on the fly) clutch perch/lever. Clutch lever effort is modest. With a riding position (seat/tank) that is flat and thin and a seat height that is fairly low, the YZF just doesn't exhibit any traits that belie its open class heritage (other than what happens when the right grip is twisted!).

You'll note we didn't dwell on the amount of power the motor makes, simply because it's just a given. Explosive power from idle to redline, the YZ450F has way more than what's needed in virtually any situation we can comprehend. When considering the '03 YZF, the question is where it might work well off-road. Obviously, it's going to be more at home in more open terrain, places where you can take advantage of its horsepower advantage and not see too much variation in speed. Hare scrambles and cross country racing for sure. However, don't discount enduro either, as with its light weight it will have less of a tendency to wear out the rider over the long haul than traditional off-road thumpers (which typically weigh 20+ pounds more). The '03 YZ450F is one machine that can and probably will do just about anything. **▲**

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AMA# _____ **EXP.** _____ **ECEA#** _____

NAME _____ **AGE** _____

ADDRESS _____ **CITY** _____

STATE _____ **ZIP** _____ **PHONE ()** _____

AMA CLUB NAME _____ **BIKE MAKE** _____ **DISP** _____

CHECK SKILL LEVEL AND CLASS

AA _____ **A** _____ **B** _____ **C** _____

125(A&B only) _____ **200** _____ **250** _____ **OPEN** _____ **VET (30+)** _____ **SENIOR (40+)** _____

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RAIN MEN

Slogging through the Southern mud

Volunteer Hare Scrambles Round 3, Bybee, TN 11/10/02

It would be a hard task to find a prettier place in the fall than eastern Tennessee at the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. A drought-stricken summer followed by above-normal rainfall in autumn seemed to intensify the color in the fall foliage. It was a beautiful ride from the motel to the track as the sun rose over the mountains shining on the gorgeous fall colors. We were all hoping the sun would stay out. I had called the race promoter, John Strange, earlier in the week to see how the course was going to be. "The course will probably be twelve miles long or so with plenty of off-camber turns and downhills. No doubt there will be tons of elevation changes with the normal Tennessee fieldstone and roots. We sure don't need any more rain." Well, more rain came during the week, with rain predicted to move in by race day afternoon, but maybe it would hold off.

Strolling through the pits I noticed AA Rider Dobie Leonard was piloting a new scooter. Seems he made the switch from a RM125 to a KTM EXC 200. "Hey, Dobie, what gives?"

"I really like my new KTM. I'm getting more

acquainted with it with each ride. I don't have to stay on top of it as much as my RM," answered Dobie.

I also ran into my old friend and former travel companion Brad Wallace. Brad is a former pro motocrosser from the '70s. He traveled to many a national motocross and gave Hannah and the likes fits at local southeastern races when they showed up. "What brings you here, Brad?"

"I haven't raced and have hardly ridden in twelve years, but I've been itching to compete again," Brad said. "The new style moto/supercross is just too dangerous, plus you sit around all day to ride two 10-minute motos. I just want to ride, have fun, and not worry about making any triples."

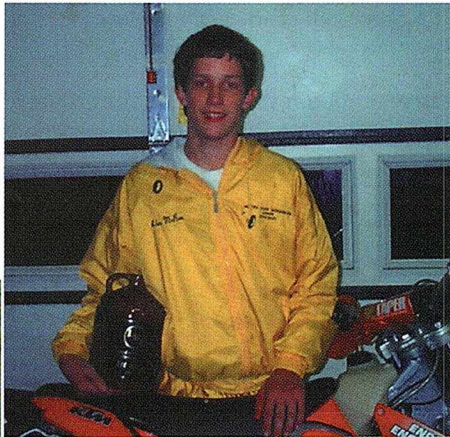
As the morning got underway, it was obvious the ground was slick. An overnight shower seemed to be the culprit. I thought I was back in the '70s as Brad Wallace grabbed the start of the Super Senior B class and held the lead for one lap before Royce Wyatt and Dennie Roberts slipped past him by race end. Four Stroke C rider, Tony Hodges raced his first hare scramble and came away a winner on his YZ 250 F, as Mike Gunter and Jeff Truill stayed within

Photos by racedaypix.com

striking distance. Frank Schoenbeck took overall honors, as he won Super Senior A over Alan Martin.

The largest class of the morning race was in Vet C. It was the closest action, as well, with Chris Wilson, Phillip Lallement and Mike Brown sliding, beating and banging off of each other all morning. Wilson finally got the nod and took first in Vet C. At Cherokee, 200 C Rider Alex McRee had the win only to crash on the last lap. This week it looked as though he had first sewn-up again only to slip on the final lap again, but his day will come.

A few minutes before the beginning of the second race, a light rain began to fall. Sixteen AA riders took to the line and blasted off at 1:00 p.m. Kingspoint, Tennessee, Suzuki-Kawasaki-KTM rider Doby Leonard took the lead and was never challenged. Things were tight behind him as Dustin Gibson, Tommy Veator and Bryan Henson were going at it. On the final lap, Gibson had about a minute cushion



Left: Doby Leonard flew out ahead of everyone at the Volunteer and picked up a first overall finish.
Top: Alex McRee scored his first SETRA class win at the Little Brown Jug hare scrambles.
Above: Russel Bobbitt (14) got the jump on everyone at the LBJ, and picked up yet another overall.



Both events were unbelievably slick, as these two riders stuck on a hillside can attest.

while Veator nipped Henson by a few seconds. Husky-mounted Landon Carter rounded out the top five. Thank goodness the rain lasted only about fifteen minutes, or it could have really been bad. "I could not believe how slick it got out there today. I am just glad it didn't rain very long. But, I sure like my 200 KTM," explained a very happy Doby Leonard.

Chris Clark put it on the Four Stroke A class, with Jeff Harris and Shaun Dailey in tow. Steven Litz and Kenny Satterfield had a good battle in Senior B and pulled away from the field. Top A rider went to Andrew Kendrick, sponsored by H & H KTM, Off Road Cycle, and Trials Training Center. Andrew is definitely AA bound. Top B rider went to 250 B winner, Seth Derryberry, who finished 29th overall. The

third race of the year, the third different overall winner of the year...a very competitive season is shaping up.

It was a tough race, but fun. Unfortunately, during the night right after the race the weather got severe. In the town of Mossy Grove, Tennessee, about 50 miles west of the race site, 16 people were killed and 80 injured by a heavy storm, which completely erased every structure in the community. Our prayers go out to the families of Mossy Grove.

Little Brown Jug H.S. Round 4, River Falls, SC 11/17/02

It might not be a bad idea to buy some stock in EBC, for I know brake pad sales in the Southeast have got to be on the upswing because of the rain we are experiencing. It looked as if Little Brown Jug would

dodge the bullet, but a front moved in on Friday before the run and managed to dump several more inches of rain before moving out early Sunday morning. The parking area was so muddy, most chose to pit on several rural roads in the surrounding area. For those who chose to park in the pits, no worries. Two farm tractors were on hand to rescue the stranded. The amateur mud bog late in the afternoon was well worth the \$5 gate fee.

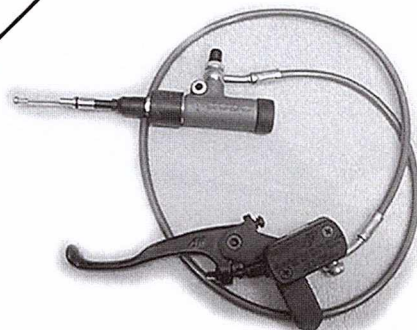
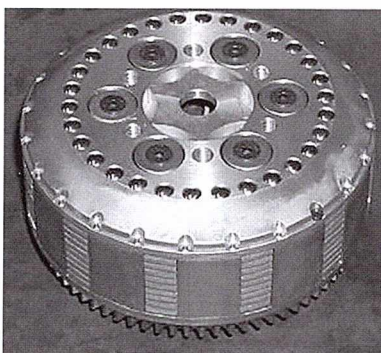
The Greenville Enduro Riders always throw out a great course and this year was no exception. I checked in with club president Steward Baylor to get the skinny. "We have a great course laid out with a little bit of everything," Baylor said. "Unfortunately with all the rain we had to cut out about four miles this morning, leaving about eight miles of track. The two-race system will be canned with one four-lap

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Little Brown Jug (Unofficial Results)		
AA		
1. Russell Bobbitt	Gas	
2. Doby Leonard	KTM	
3. Jason Chancey	KTM	
4. Tommy Veator	KTM	
5. Eric Rentschler		
200A		
1. Dennis Johnson	KTM	
2. Andrew Kendrick	KTM	
3. Bryan Grant	KTM	
4. Mark Kelley	Yam	
5. Josh Leigh	KTM	
200B		
1. Brian Wozniak	Kaw	
2. Dustin Stevens	KTM	
3. Luke Durham	KTM	
4. Steven Landis	KTM	
5. Matthew Hadley	KTM	
200C		
1. Alex McRee	KTM	
2. Jason White	Yam	
3. Patrick Dortch	Kaw	
4. Brian Eve	Hon	
5. Adam Hewatt	Hon	
250A		
1. Roger Guthrie	Hon	
2. Gary Carrier	Suz	
3. Robert Blalock	Yam	
4. Chris Oys	Yam	
5. Nate Phillips	Kaw	
250B		
1. Steve Peek	Yam	
2. Corey Garrett	Yam	
3. John Cardozo	KTM	
4. Seth Derryberry	Suz	
5. Doug McCarsen	Yam	
250 C		
1. Jeff Booher	Kaw	
2. Chris George	Suz	
3. Kevin Parker	Suz	
4. Christopher Book	Hon	
5. Doug Attridge	KTM	
Four Stroke A		
1. Mark Lee	Yam	
2. Chris Clark	KTM	
3. Nikki Green	KTM	
4. Nick Gentry	Yam	
5. Jon Phillips	Hon	
Four Stroke B		
1. Sean Dillon	Yam	
2. Mathew Rutledge	KTM	
3. Benjie Whitey	Yam	
4. Michael Johnson	Hon	
5. Fletcher Aspdn		
Four Stroke C		
1. Michael Collins		
2. Jeff Trull	Hon	
3. Bill Edenfield	Yam	
4. Jeff Bain	Suz	
5. Gregory Walker	KTM	
Heavy Trail		
1. James Anderson	Yam	
2. Bryan Cole	Hon	
3. Randy Saxon	KTM	
4. Jason Juneau	Yam	
5. Jason Gibbs	KTM	
Junior		
1. Tyler MacDonald	Yam	
2. Ryan Overton	Kaw	
3. Justin Cole	Kaw	
4. Corey MacDonald	Yam	
5. Cameron Allen	Suz	

Volunteer H.S. AA

1. Doby Leonard KTM
2. Dustin Gibson KTM
3. Tommy Veator KTM
4. Bryan Henson KTM
5. Landon Carter Suz

200A

1. A. Kendrick KTM
2. T. Reynolds KTM
3. Robbie Neeley KTM
4. Brian Grant KTM
5. Josh Leigh KTM

200B

1. D. Stevens KTM
2. Steven Landis KTM
3. Chris Lady KTM
4. J. Monsrud Gas
5. Nik Johnson KTM

200C

1. Casey Rollins
2. Alex McRee KTM
3. B. Breedlove Yam
4. Robert Elrod KTM
5. Nick Adams Hon

250A

1. Roger Guthrie Hon
2. Chris Oys Yam
3. Clifford Ousley Yam
4. Gary Carrier Suz
5. Chris Kile Kaw

250B

1. S. Derryberry Suz
2. Corey Garrett Yam
3. Stephen Webb KTM
4. John Hoyer Hon
5. Curtis King Yam

250C

1. Jeff Booher Kaw
2. Kevin Parker Suz
3. Joe Browning Kaw
4. Chris George Suz
5. Chris Book Hon

Four Stroke A

1. Chris Clark KTM
2. Jeff Harris KTM
3. Shaun Dailey Yam
4. Nikki Green KTM
5. Jon Phillips Hon

Four Stroke B

1. Sean Dillon Yam
2. Benjie Whitey Yam
3. Tim Harmon Hon

Four Stroke C

1. Tony Hodges Yam
2. Mike Gunter
3. Jeff Trull Hon
4. Bill Edenfield Yam
5. Geoff Poole Hon

Heavy Trail

1. Bobby RobertsKaw
2. Doug Brandon Hon
3. D. Witherow Kaw
4. Jim Galbreath Yam

5. Trevor Hall Suz
1. T. MacDonald Yam
2. Ryan Overton Kaw
3. C. MacDonald Yam
4. Cameron Allen Suz

Light Trail

1. Kevin Gregory KTM
2. Guy Stump Kaw
3. B. Lingerfelt Suz
4. Chris Jones KTM
5. Gary Clark KTM

Master A

1. Jim Ford Gas
2. Frank Nelson KTM

Master B

1. Fred Hardwick Hon
2. Steve Chancey KTM
3. Jeb Barrow KTM
4. Jack Burt KTM

Master C

1. Reg Wrinkle KTM
2. Ray Wood KTM
3. S. Blackman KTM

Open A

1. M. HutchinsonKTM
2. Mitch McRee KTM
3. Paul McCall KTM
4. David Wolfe KTM
5. Mike Douglas Suz

Open B

1. Adam Delph Hon
2. Curtis Turner Gas
3. B. Jernigan KTM
4. Bruce Gann Hon
5. David Davis KTM

Open C

1. K. Galloway KTM
2. Greg Griswold KTM
3. Johnny GaineyHon
4. Dan Childers Hon
5. Tim Gridley Suz

Super Senior A

1. F. Schoenbeck Yam
2. Alan Martin Gas
3. Johnny Futo KTM
4. Johnny Able KTM
5. D. Burkhalter KTM

Super Senior B

1. Royce Wyatt KTM
2. D. Roberts KTM
3. Brad Wallace Suz
4. S. Stansel Sr. Yam
5. Kenne Hicks Hon

Super Senior C

1. Robert SnyderKTM
2. Randy Knapp Hon

Senior A

1. D. Holbrook Kaw
2. P. Williamson Gas

Senior B

1. Steven Litz Hon
2. Ken SatterfieldKTM

3. Greg Armour Yam
4. Chris Doran Yam
5. Bill Hart KTM

Senior C

1. Mark Fuller Kaw
2. Rob Howard KTM
3. Chris Ingle Hon
4. Tim SchweigerYam
5. Gary Mauldin Hon

Vet A

1. Mike Grizzle KTM
2. Jeff Collins KTM
3. Frank Anello KTM
4. Rick Wiles Kaw
5. Scott Krueger KTM

Vet B

1. Pooner Powell KTM
2. Mark Loyd Kaw
3. Robert Mielke Hon
4. S. Simmons Gas
5. Shane Sexton Suz

Vet C

1. Chris Wilson
2. Phil Lallement Suz
3. Mike Brown Hon
4. Gary Hughey Hon
5. Dean Staley KTM

Women

1. Ginny Parker Suz

got airborne and somehow managed to stay on the bike, but he lost momentum and I was able to get by. He stayed glued to my fender, but he must have crashed about three miles from the finish, because I stopped hearing him."

Leonard held on to second, followed by Neely Racing KTM 300-mounted Jason Chancey, Tommy Veator and Eric Renstschler.

After the race, Leonard was nursing a sore thumb. "I got a bad start and had to work around some real fast guys. Tommy Veator has got to be the hardest guy to pass, but after I cleared him, I started catching Russell. I got around him and hopefully was about to pull away, until I hit a hole or something in one of the fields that sent me every-which-a-way (a Southern term). Russell got by but I stayed on him waiting for another chance when I tangled with a lapped rider and hit a tree and broke my thumb. After that, I just decided to settle for second."

Augusta KTM's Tommy Veator turned in another good ride. "This year has been going okay for me. I have switched from a 400 EXC to a 200 EXC, because I really like the smaller bike. It's a blast to ride. This year I just want to go out and have a good time every weekend and so far I have."

No last lap crash for Alex McRee this day, as he won his first SETRA race in the 200 C class. Volunteer promoter John Strange decided to ride this round and took top honors in Super Senior A aboard a Husky, followed by Alan Martin and Johnny Futo.

Another Cycle Specialty rider came in first, as RM-mounted Ginny Parker won her fourth straight in the Women's class. Yamaha rider Mark Lee won his first race of the year in Four Stroke A over Nikki Green. Thanks Greenville Enduro Riders for putting on a great race, despite the weather. ⬆

race to begin at one o'clock. It will take a little while to make some changes, but we will have a race!"

Indeed, he was right. At one o'clock the AAs took off with Russell Bobbitt grabbing the lead, followed by twelve cats nipping at his tail. The Cycle Specialty-backed Bobbitt lead the first lap followed by Augusta Kawasaki/Suzuki/KTM rider Tommy Veator and Doby Leonard, who was working his way through the field

by way of a bad start. Just before the end of lap two, Leonard got by Veator and set his sights on Bobbitt. He made the move on Bobbitt as the two took the white flag. Bobbitt reclaimed the lead as Leonard bobbled in one of the field sections, and hung on to become the first repeat winner on the season.

"On the last lap, I overtook Doby in the last muddy field section," said Bobbitt. "He hit something and

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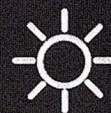
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BACK WHERE IT ALL

Talking to Barry Higgins about the old days and the state of the sport to

A local radio station had a "Yes" weekend recently. They gave away cash and prizes to lucky winners who could answer trivia questions about the legendary rock and roll band, with plenty of Yes tunes in between. As I was driving home from one of my favorite riding spots, I tuned into the tribute just in time to hear a tune that included these words: "hearing your wondrous stories" and "returning to hear your wondrous stories." I was suddenly taken back in my mind to the seventies to a garage in Smyrna, Georgia.

I was a fifteen-year-old kid who was nuts about racing motocross and ecstatic to learn that Barry Higgins had just moved less than a mile from my house.

Needless to say, I was one of the first to welcome him to the neighborhood. There were plenty of great tracks in the southeast at that time with stiff competition every weekend. In between my motos in the Amateur class, I would watch Barry terrorize the Pro classes. I was amazed (and still am) at the smooth and near effortless riding style he possessed. In the '70s, there were Nationals at Charlotte, North Carolina; at the speedway in Atlanta, Georgia (either the Atlanta International Raceway or Road Atlanta) and St. Petersburg, Florida's Sunshine Speedway. Barry would always be towards the front of them, as well.

In 1978, Barry and his wife Patti opened H & H Maico in their garage at their home. I bought the second or third bike they ever sold, and shortly thereafter became the official shop sweeper, bike assembler, and gofer, and when they were out of town at a big race, the One-Man-Band at H & H Maico. It was during that time I heard countless stories about the early years of motocross in America. With the Yes tune in my ear and Barry's stories etched in my head, I thought of the tons of people who were not aware of Barry's accomplishments as a pioneer of motocross in this country. He probably came along too early for the notoriety he deserves. I called Barry the next day, and asked for an interview. His reaction was predictable, "I haven't done anything." Yeah, right, I thought. He finally agreed and invited me to stop by his farm one Sunday or his shop after hours. He had one stipulation—do not print any of the stuff we did with our buddies from the Kawasaki shop every Thursday night at Chelsey's Pub (a country music bar). I promised, and a couple of nights later, showed up at H&H KTM around 6:30 p.m. with tape recorder ready...

How old were you when you started riding?

Twelve, I think. Something like that.

Where did you live then?

Kinnelon, New Jersey. I still have a t-shirt that says "Where the hell is Kinnelon, New Jersey?"

Did you start because your Dad rode?

Yeah, He rode during World War II and he rode back and forth to work on a bike. He had done some racing before WWII, some cinder track and some different things. Then after WWII was over, he quit riding and he didn't start back until he bought me a bike in June of 1959.

How old is your dad now?

He's 84 and still riding and racing.

Man! What kind of bike did he buy you?

It was a 125cc BSA Bantam, it was a 4.5 horse-



Barry and Patti in the shop today. Far left: Barry even rides a modern bike now and then, believe it or not.



Harry and Barry Higgins with their trophy collection in 1964. Right: The first MX des Nations team—Bryan Kenny, Higgins, John Barclay, Gunnar Lindstrom.



By David Sutton

BEGAN

power, 3-speed, 2-stroke.

How long did it take until you rode in your first race? About two months, it was in September of that year. I rode a trials. I actually rode two classes in the trials. Back then, they had street bike trials too, so I rode my Bantam in the regular trials and my Dad had a 150 Triumph that had lights and all on it, and I rode that in the street trials. And I won, I was high scorer in the trials. Of course everyone was mad about that because they were all riding Harleys and Triumphs and stuff,

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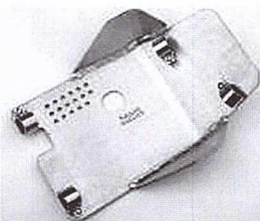


In 1970, Higgins attracted the attention of this magazine. Below: Patti Higgins just a few years back.

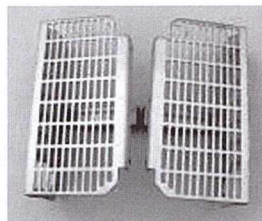


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Pretty much. In 1968 I was riding a BSA Victor. At the beginning of 1968 I was riding a twin pipe CZ, by the end of '68 a side pipe CZ. I rode those in 1969, too. I was still riding a BSA twin in the Open class. It was over 500cc stuff and the twins were fun to ride on the right track. I did a few half miles on the twins, a little road racing in between, just enough to find out that I didn't like doing that.

In 1970, I was sponsored by Ossa. They picked me up after the Inter Am series. When I got back to New York they gave me a call and they paid me to ride. First rider in America to be paid to race.

Do you remember how much you were paid?

Yeah, it was \$125 per week, which in 1970 that wasn't a bad deal. I got the \$125, I got my expenses paid for racing and promoting, and then John Taylor matched whatever I won. I made a bunch of money that year. Of course by 1971 I didn't have any of it left. I was busy throwing it away in "various places."

So basically, Ossa was your first factory ride?

Yes, and I was the first guy in the States who got paid to do nothing but ride motocross bikes. I was the first real factory rider.

And you won the first two nationals?

Yes. The first real 500 national MX they had was actually here in Georgia at Road Atlanta in 1971. And the second one was in Memphis. I won that one. I was riding a CZ. It was kind of funny because it was after I had gotten some money from CZ and Sonny Defeo was also getting some from CZ and I won the first two 500 races, and Sonny won the first two 250 races, both on CZs. And then the third one in Washington, Indiana, I got a second behind Wyman Priddy on another CZ. Something happened to Sonny in that one. CZ wouldn't send Sonny and I out west to do the rest and I had enough to do here back east. I was making enough money, I did not go, so consequently

Brad Lackey won all the races out west that year. I think we rode one more back east later on that year, and he wound up winning. I was sort of "babysitting" Sonny back then, because he was ten years younger than me and he was still in school when we were doing all of that. So he pretty much couldn't go out west. Also, I went to Europe between the nationals in the east and rode some GPs, too, and all that was on a CZ as well.

How did you find time to do that?

I don't know! Especially when you consider I was the mechanic, truck driver, rider, you name it.

In 1973, I got a deal to ride YZ Yamahas for a while. I rode Noguchi Yamahas and a couple of real YZ Yamahas even before Yamaha had them in this country. Then I made the stupidest move in my life—when Kawasaki offered me some money and I went and rode for Kawasaki. I left the Yamahas, which were by far the best Jap bike out back then, and the twin shock bikes that you could buy were pretty much like the ones we had except this guy Noguchi did the motors up on them a little different, but they were really fast, handled good, light, reliable, worked good and the first 250 Kawasaki I had handled bad. I went from the top three in all of the Nationals on the Yamaha to barely making it into the top 10 on the Kawasaki.

It got better later on, and then we got those first 450s. They were called F12s which were the prototypes for the KX450, and those things were really fast. But they handled like they had hinges in the middle of them and they broke every time you rode them. When you got a 450 that weights 189 pounds, there can't be much there to keep them together. When I sort of got terminated from Kawasaki—the program I was on ended—I went to work for Maico and rode Maicos from 1974 to 1984. And when they went out permanently, I started riding KTMs at that time.

Let's talk about the 1971 Motocross des Nations. Who was there?

There were three of us who were really Americans, and one imposter. We had me, Brian Kenney and a guy by the name of John Barclay who was from California someplace and he just happened to be there riding some GPs and international races and so we got him on the team, and then Gunnar Lindstrom was there and he was living in this country at that time, racing on a US license. That was the first sort-of Team USA. We blew up Pomeroy's little bubble in Florida on account of that, because he was telling everybody he was on the first team in 1972. I had to tell him, sorry on that Jimmy but you weren't. And then his brother Ron told me "he's been lying to me all of these years!"

When you rode for Maico, did you stay in this country?

Yeah, except for the Six Days. I rode the Six Days quite a few times on the Maico, but mostly it was Nationals and this and that and qualifiers here in the US.

Were you one of the first motocrossers to ride off road, as well?

Yeah. I always liked riding in the woods.

One thing that did not involve a Maico was the Daytona Supercross in 1977.

Yeah. Right in the middle of all of that Ekhart Shaun, who ran Maico, decided I didn't need to have a bike to ride and race, 'cause he said it wasn't doing us any good. This was after I got second at Daytona in the 500 (when they ran a 500 class). I had been doing all of the races and ended up fourth or fifth for the year overall. And I got pissed off, and the next year a friend of mine worked for Ossa and he asked me if I wanted to ride a GP 250 Phantom. Which I did. I rode in the Florida Winter-Am Series and the Atlanta Supercross

(Continued on page 40)



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FROZEN TURKEY

Ah yes, woods racing in the snow. What could be better?

Conditions were perfect for yesterday's Turkey run at Meriden Motorcycle Club's "Boneyard." As promised, they laid out a fun course for us that skipped some of the club's notorious boney sections of rocky hell. The last few days had left a blanket of just four to six inches of snow on top of fairly soft ground. The frost hadn't taken a good hold of Connecticut's soil at the time.

I picked up Martin and his 400EXC at about 9:30 and we pulled in to the club less than an hour later. Martin was more surprised than I was to see that many of the bikes were shod with spiked tires and plenty of others had screws on the knobs. I had considered screwing my tires, but opted for the lazy approach and planned to set myself in the back row with my standard well-worn M12s. As



No spikes, no go. Waiting for the "turkey run" start.

part of my meticulous race preparation ritual, I had also filled the Gas Gas with fuel. I was ready to rock at the Boneyard.

We met Pete James in the parking area and Martin picked his brain about various KTM trivia. Pete is a really nice guy and proved to be plenty fast in the race. We signed up for the race and were given a playing card that would get punched for each completed lap. We were also given a raffle ticket that would replace the poker hand ritual I expected. Time to suit up and pick the right clothes for the temperature. It was still in the 30s and was only expected to get in to the mid 40s. I had a lined windbreaker that I tried on, but I got hot before we even got the bikes started, so I went with a T-shirt, a turtle-neck, and my lucky Kenny Bartram jersey. I pulled on longies under the shift

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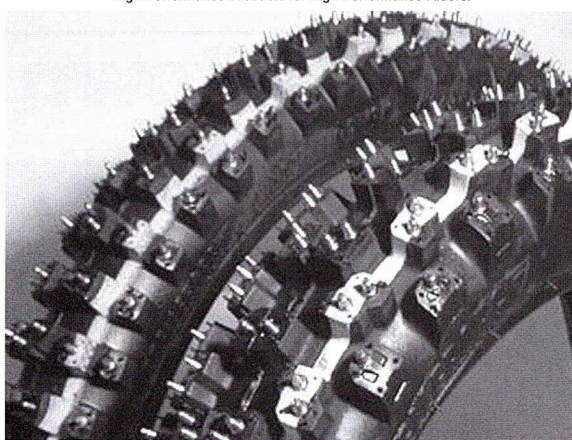
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The Mitas C-10 rear and C-11 front combination are proven winners & are our first choice for rocky/muddy & even sandy terrain. Ask Kevin Bennett and John Burgard how much they like their Mitas tires!!

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baggies that I would wear so that I could carry a camera and dry gloves in the cargo pockets.

Soon, it was time to line up for the dead engine, free-for-all start. I lined up in the back and watched as the A and AA riders enjoyed the pre-race hijinx and tomfoolery. Dave Gunn was up there on a CR500 and he was picked to be the probable winner.

When the clipboard dropped, the front rows took off like the crazed maniacs that they surely are. There were maybe six of us watching from the back row and nobody was jumping out there, so I went. Traction was, well...—it wasn't. The field of racers was only thirty or thirty-five riders and they hadn't cleared the groove as much as I had hoped they would. The nice part was that the snow created a stark contrast to the brown line and it was easy to follow the course without scanning the trees for arrows. Just follow the brown line. Easy, right? Well, maybe not.

I came upon my buddy Rich who was hung up behind someone who had stalled. I was able to pull a pass on him just as he got moving again, but suddenly I had pressure from behind and began to push my own limits so as to let them flow behind me and find a good spot where they could pass me if needed. The brown line split left and right around a couple of two inch saplings. In a moment of low-traction indecision, I center-punched the saplings.

As we were driving home last night, I told Martin that I hadn't been thrown from my bike, despite my few crashes. But it came back to me last night, how I got tossed off to the right in the sapling incident. I stumbled and spun, wondering who was right behind me. I looked at the ground and tried to keep stumbling out of the groove so that I wouldn't block the line or get run over.

Crossing back to the bike, I noticed that my front fender was folded in droopy disgrace. I pulled it back to its rightful and proud position, but it flopped back. It was hanging by a thread, so I ripped it off and placed it like a marker at the base of the saplings. I took off knowing that the spray from the front wheel would present a real visibility issue for me as the race wore on. I was in dead last; a position that I'm used to, and I assumed my usual role as predatory buzzard, hoping I'd get to pass a few folks who had their own problems and misfortunes. And so I would.

But there were few obvious prey for a buzzard like myself. Martin looked like he was waiting for me as I passed him on one of the long shallow hill-climbs. He picked up and followed behind me for a while, and when I stalled in a rooty soft spot, I pulled out the camera to catch him coming through. He stopped and told me he was beat and might sit out a lap. I reminded him that it's all about the fun and to make that his goal.

Martin took off ahead of me and soon we both came in to be scored for our first of the four(ish)-mile loops. My elapsed time was 36:01, and just then Dave Gunn came through to be scored for his second lap. As usual, the fast guy was exactly twice as fast as I am. I told the scorers, "Oh, I'd be just as fast as him, but I stopped to take pictures." They looked at me as if they weren't sure if I was joking. Then I said, "And I usually don't run a front fender." They sent me off with smiles all around.



They come and go so quickly. Sixteen seconds in the life of Dave Gunn, as he passes through a check and wins the snow ride overall.



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Martin pulled off to take a break.

My second lap was pretty uneventful. My biggest concern was watching for lappers so that I could stay out of their way. I was able to ace the few hillclimbs that hung me up on the first lap. And the trail was in really good condition, just cleared enough to be good for my tire setup, but not too rutted yet. I passed a KTM with a broken kicker and a Husqvarna with a worn out rider. Sticking with my humble pace, I scored my second lap with an elapsed time of 1:13:04.

I picked up Martin and one of his buddies who rides motocross right after the scoring area. Evidently, woods racing in the snow is mighty different from railing berms and flying long double jumps. The motocross guy was out of his element

and I was faster than he was. I never said I was fast, but it's always nice to beat someone, especially a racer with a decent number on his bike.

My third lap would be my last, and I guess I knew it about halfway through. It was just a question of simple math. The leader was twice as fast as I was. Even if I beat him in to the barrels, I'd be almost 40 minutes behind them for the festivities. I was okay with that, because I know the club likes to savor the fun for a while after the event, and I had another lap left in me. I was having a lot of fun, but the trail was getting downright muddy as the temperature had warmed. The ruts were starting to get deep enough that I knew there would be a couple of stickers in them on the next lap. My ground speed felt like it was up, and that combined with the muddy conditions and the missing front fender to force a few stops to clean my goggles. Some day I'll get wise to the tear-off thing.

I stalled on the stepped hillclimb out of the ravine and took a little too long getting started again. Still, the Michelins hooked up well in the snotty steepness and I was able to ride up from a dead stop. I was impressed that the tires were doing as well as they were. The groove was fairly wide and, with my confidence up, I was rolling along at a better clip. But get off line and the snow was right there. And snow isn't a good place to be cornering hard on summer rubber. There was a lot of tossing and catching that last lap. Just as I got close to the landmarks near scoring Dave Gunn ripped past me; smooth and fast into a rocky downhill left hairpin. Friggin' amazing.

I came in just about a minute behind him. Elapsed time 1:52:51. The girl who scored me said "You're done," and so I was. I thanked all the folks who had done the starting and scoring, stopped to soak up the moment, and then rolled lazily down to the van. I wasn't cold at all during the whole race, but the dry clothes sure did feel good.

The race boss came by to check that we were all in safely and then told us that our entry fee (\$20) earned us free food and beer. I love this place; the Meriden Motorcycle Club, founded in 1923. I had a couple burgers, a chili dog, and a few cold beers. Then it was raffle time and Martin won a nice pair of Thor gloves which happened to be good KTM colors. Pete "Whenindoubt" James had done five laps, and seemed to have had a good time.

Martin and I loaded up our muddy messes and pulled out for home, moaning and groaning as our joints began to stiffen up. But we both had the fever and just began to figure out when we could ride next weekend. You don't have to finish first to have fun in an informal competition like this. It's just a thrill to take the green flag and the checkers, even if it's just a clipboard and a girl saying "You're done."

Thanks again to the Meriden Motorcycle Club. And thanks to Martin for joining me in the fun. A good time was had by all. Except maybe that worn out guy on the Husqvarna. He just left the bike out in the woods and walked in, making the bike's rightful owner walk back out to get it. Hey, it's not for everybody, and the conditions were tricky. But adventure is good. And that's what this year's Turkey Run was, a slippery, tree-lined adventure on two wheels. I wonder what the weather will be like next year? ↑

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Curly Fern Enduro

An ECEA, AMA & AMA District 7 Sanctioned Enduro

March 16, 2003

Indian Mills Deer Club, Indian Mills, New Jersey

Keytime 8:00 am



Start: Located on Atsion Road at the Indian Mills Deer Club. From NJ Rt. 206 turn west on Atsion Road (intersection located approx. 7.5 miles north of Hammonton and approx. 10.3 miles south of the Rt. 206 & Rt. 70 intersection).

Entry Fee: \$35.00

Drawing Date: March 8, 2003

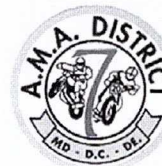
Information: (856) 227-5078

E-Mail whoops@pics.com

Mail Entries to: South Jersey Enduro Riders

49 Sherwood Drive

Turnersville, NJ 08012



Sign-Up: Saturday, March 15, 2003 from 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Sunday, March 16, 2003 from 6:00 am to KEYTIME

Requirements:

- ♦ All riders must have a valid motorcycle driver's license, registration and insurance. ALL ENTRANTS will have to present this documentation at sign-up.
- ♦ All motorcycles must be fitted with a valid license plate, headlight, taillight and an exhaust system equipped with a spark arrestor.
- ♦ All motorcycles must be capable of passing an AMA sound test
- ♦ All riders must be current members of the ECEA and AMA. ECEA tests will be given on Saturday and Sunday (there is no fee for this test). AMA applications will be available at sign-up.

Course: Approx. 80 miles of sand roads, fire-cuts and South Jersey trails. The gas will be located back at the Deer Club (approx. 45 ground miles).

Food: Available at the Deer Club both days. There will be a spaghetti dinner on Saturday night.

Lodging: Ramada Inn (609) 561-5700 Free Camping at the Deer Club

Fuel: CAM-2 Race gas available at Indian Mills Texaco on Rt. 206 (5 minutes from the start)



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Do not write in this box:

Rider's Class	Rider's Number
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DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF THE EVENT: CURLY FERN ENDURO- MARCH 16, 2003- INDIAN MILLS

I hereby give up all my rights to sue or make any claim for damages due to negligence or any other reason whatsoever against the American Motorcyclist Association and its district organizations, the promoters, sponsors and all other persons, participants or organizations conducting or connected with this event for injury to property or person I may suffer, including crippling injury or death, while participating in the event and while upon event premises. I know the risks of danger to myself and my property while preparing for and participating in the event and while upon the event premises and, relying upon my own judgment and ability, assume all such risks of loss and hereby agree to reimburse all costs to those persons or organizations connected with this event for damages incurred as a result of my negligence.

THIS IS A RELEASE: _____ Date: _____ *Rider's Age: _____

*all riders must be 18 years old Signature of Participant _____

Name: _____ ECEA #: _____ AMA #: _____ Exp. _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: () _____ E-Mail Address: _____

AMA Club Name: _____ Bike Make: _____ Displacement: _____

Rider's Class (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> AA	A-125	A-200	A-250	A-Open	A-Vet	A-Sr
A-SSr	A-4 Stroke	B-125	B-200	B-Open	B-Vet	B-Sr
B-SSr	B-4 Stroke	C-200	C-250	C-Open	C-Vet	C-Sr
	C-4 Stroke	Masters	Women			

RESULTS will be available on SJER's website at <http://www.pics.com/~whoops/SJER.htm> and the ECEA's website.



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- All bikes must have a valid motorcycle registration, liability insurance, and USFS approved spark arrester @ 99db.
- Riders must carry: Drivers License, Registration, and Insurance cards.
- Bikes must have ,headlite, tailite, and license plate mounted on rear fender

Course Information: A gas truck will be provided for 2 gas availables Riders will need 2 gas cans.

The Enduro will be held in Port Elizabeth NJ at Tri County Sportsmen club grounds on Rt 646 Millville-Port Cumberland Rd. Primitive camping in the club grounds & food available.

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From the North- Garden State Parkway to Exit 17, Follow Arrows.

From the West- Philadelphia, Schuykyl Expressway to Walt Whitman Bridge, to 42 East, to 55 South, to end follow arrows

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Or death, whether such injury arises while I am preparing for or
Participating in the event or while I am upon the premises.
I know the risks of danger to myself and my property while participating
In the event and while upon the event premises and, relying upon my own

Judgement and ability, assume all such risk of loss and here by agree to
Reimburse all cost to those persons or organizations connected with this
Even for damages incurred as a result of my negligence.

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Port Elizabeth, NJ 08348

Rider
Number

Class code

Payment

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Signature _____ Date _____ Age _____

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Rider's Class (check one) ☐ AA ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C (beginners please choose C class)

☐ 4 Stroke ☐ Vet 30+ ☐ Senior 40+ ☐ Super Senior 50+ ☐ Masters 60+ ☐ Women ☐ Dual Sport

ONLINE MADNESS

Finding motorcycle entertainment online is fun and getting easier

I admit it. I am addicted to my Internet connection. Whenever I am looking for information on anything, I go online. Most pop culture items (music, movies, electronics equipment, etc.) have plenty of information online, but motorcycle information sometimes is more difficult to find. Many of the websites that I am going to mention will be familiar to motorcycle enthusiasts who have an online connection. However, if you haven't been online in a while (or ever) or are up late one night looking for something to surf, here are some great sites.

www.google.com – This is the site to start at if you any questions. Just type in the keywords and let the KTM 520 SX engine do all of the rest. This thing is fast, and it points you to the right site 99% of the time. The technology behind the site is very neat, the site engine (there are many across the U.S.) crawls through sites and the links in sites, looking for information on everything. If a site exists that is linked to another site, chances are that it can be found with google. Another plus (maybe not for everyone!) is that porn sites never come up as potential hits. With past search engines you had to wade through tons of porn sites just to find the sites you wanted.

www.thumpertalk.com – Are you looking for information about your four-stroke? Without a doubt, this is the place to go. This is basically a bulletin board system where you can post messages and get responses from all over the world. The site has a pretty decent search engine so you can browse over two years of messages. Thumpertalk is run in a very organized manner and all of the specialized satellite sites (YZF, CRF, KTM, Exotic, etc.) have moderators to keep the flame wars (basically email fights) to a minimum. The people on this site are generally very nice to newcomers. If you are looking for a place to get a question answered about a thumper, I would definitely start here. The best part about it is that it is totally free. You can even find bikes (and post them) in the "For Sale" area. However, if you use this site a lot, browse the Thumpertalk shop and purchase something. The shop is what keeps this site alive.

www.off-road.com – This is an online magazine more than anything. They have articles about all kinds of off-road activities. The main reason for mentioning the site, though, is the resident vintage expert, Rick "Super Hunky" Sieman. Many of you may remember him from the Dirt Bike days from way back. Rick can be asked vintage bike questions, but he only responds in his monthly column. You can read the past columns though, and you may find your question already answered. There is enough great advice interspersed with humor that all of the columns are a great read. The only negative I would have for this site is that it is a bit difficult to navigate with all of the different off-road sub-sites (trucks, ATV's, snowmobiles, etc.).

www.dirt rider.net – This is another exhaustive site



that contains a lot of information about both thumpers and ring-dingers. It is controlled a little more closely, and you have to register and pay a subscription fee before you can access many of the advanced features. The fee is very small though, and well worth it if you use the site extensively. This site has been around for over three years and thus has a lot of history on all subjects. The range of topics is a little more varied at this site, so if you are looking for a discussion area on trials, Euro GP's, or the Dakar Rally, this is the place to start. The bike-specific information is a little more difficult to find, you just have to dig a bit more than on other sites.

www.ktmtalk.com – You KTM riders want a site devoted entirely to you? This is the place to go. In addition to having dealer and parts information, this site has a discussion area that covers all areas of the orange bikes. This is a fun site to hunt around, and they have lots of topics including a women-specific discussion area, and a mini-specific area. The most interesting part of this site is that it is not associated with KTM USA. This means that the discussion is not "influenced" by the moderators of the site. In addition they have a unique way of funding the site by selling KTM parts from various dealers at a discount. They also have sort of an auction feature where they get the best bids on parts from various dealers. It's really interesting. Go to the site and choose the "About KTMTalk" link.

www.woods racer.com – This site is actually new to me. I was forwarded the link from a friend. My initial impressions are that this is another fantastic site for the off-road community. It is free, fully searchable, and definitely has topics that are near and dear to our hearts. It has product reviews, and on the whole looks like a very professional site. I'm certainly going to be coming back to this site to do some surfing.

www.ecea.org – **www.netra.org** – **www.setra.org** – **www.racermec.org** – Let's take some time to not forget the enduro association sites. These sites pro-

vide all the information to keep up on the races, rides, parties etc. If you are interested what enduros look like west of the Mississippi, take a look the RMEC site. Enduros are a bit different out west. Another thing to keep in mind when looking at these sites, is that many of the enduro clubs have sites that can be easily found using google.

One last tip: Whenever you are on a site that is interesting, ALWAYS go to the Links page. This is the area where the owners of the site lists other sites that are important or interesting to them. Without getting a reference from a friend (or a list like this) sometimes this is the only way you will discover a new site. Many gems are hidden in links pages.

A list of links can never be comprehensive, but if you are trying to find a place to start gathering information, the links above can help. Just remember that this is an activity for late at night when the garage is too cold and the kids are asleep. Make sure you have a big cup of coffee next to you (like I do now) because once you start looking up information at these sites you will have a hard time stopping.

-Phil (pwalker@nextdimengineering.com)

Editor's Picks

Phil has some great sites above, but here in the office we're compelled to add some of our favorites, smaller sites that may tend to lean towards the quirky side. One thing's for sure, if you look hard enough you can find all sorts of obscure corners on the World Wide Web. To wit:

www.ktm495.mxbikes.com – Sent in by Len, our resident Web guru (and webmaster of the trailrider.com Web site), this is the home for all the KTM 495 and 500 MX two-strokes freaks out there, and you have to love a site dedicated to the strange few who enjoy huge Open-class KTM two-strokes. If you need it, you'll love it too.

www.teammooch.com – Have a yen to read some of Charlie Williams' uncensored writings? Want to find out what's happening with the oddest club in northern Indiana? Go here and be enlightened.

www.ebay.com – You've heard of Ebay of course. What can it do for a dirt biker? Well, just type in a search on anything you want and see what the world has to offer. Especially great for the lovers of vintage bikes. Just type in "hodaka" and you may be overwhelmed.

www.trailrider.com – Want to renew your subscription or buy a new one? You can do it with a credit card on this much-neglected and hardly ever updated site. But, we're working hard on a completely new web site at the same address, and when it comes up you'll be able to do all kinds of things. When will the new site be up? We don't know! Keep checking!

www.repairmanual.net – The major sponsor of our trailrider.com site, and a great place to find repair manuals for practically everything. ↑

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“We have lots of enduro and hare scrambles riders in the hospital all the time, and they’re so funny! You’d think they would lay back and watch the TV, and forget about that silly dirt bike riding, but all they want is Trail Rider magazine. Keeping a stack of Trail Riders on hand is the only way I can get anything done on my rounds!”



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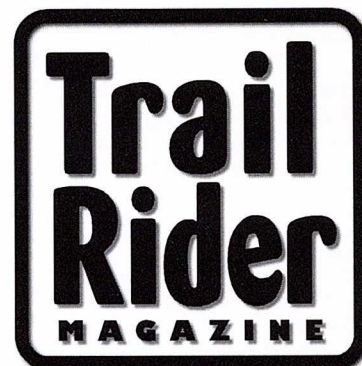
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“Approved by the AMA”

Barry Higgins

(Continued from page 31)

and in Daytona, where I was leading until the gearbox quit shifting on it in the midst of millions of dollars worth of works bikes. Everybody there had a works bike, lots of big teams like Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki, Yamaha, you know, lots of money, lots of special bikes. And this 250 Ossa pulls the hole shot, and disappears for a couple of laps. Nobody could believe that. It was a light and fast bike, but not reliable back then. Jack Penton talks about that still today.

That's when Jimmy Weinert saw you in the parking lot before the race?

Yeah, and he thought his works Yamaha was fast and then I blew his doors off with the Ossa four or five times in a row. He probably went back and cried after that, but it didn't matter. He did better in the race than we did. It doesn't matter if you have the fastest bike if it doesn't stay together during the race.

During this time, you were still the truck driver, mechanic, chief bottle washer?

Pretty much. When I ran the Inter-AM series in 1969, when I was the top American in the Inter-Am series, I had a mechanic. I had a mechanic at Ossa if I didn't go too far off from home. I had a Czech guy. In 1969 the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia so a lot of guys abandoned the place if they could, and so I would up with this Czech guy, Frankston Stanard. His brother actually rode for CZ in the 500 Grand Prix, and then he sort of got out of there and then I got him. But I didn't speak any Czech and he didn't speak any English. So it was really fun riding around in the truck with him for eight weeks trying to tell him what was wrong with my bike. I mean, we had a good time. He practiced his English on road signs. And he learned a lot of words from me he couldn't use in mixed company.

Was there a lot of sign language going on?

Oh yeah! Then in 1970 at OSSA, Henry Griff was working over here. He had escaped what the Russians were doing, and these are amazing stories in themselves, people in this country have no idea what that stuff was really like. Anyhow, Henry spoke no English. We ended up doing the Florida Winter-Am series and Inter-Am.

Switching to the Six Days, did you win any gold medals?

Finally I ended up finishing one of those things and I ended up with two gold medals, one as a Mexican and one as an American. I was the only Mexican gold medal winner up until the 1980s sometime.

How did that happen?

Lars Larson had some kind of deal and he was importing and exporting things in Mexico. He had some deal with the federation and we got Mexican licenses and all of that so we rode as Team Mexico—which really made the Americans mad. I remember Al Eames asking me “what are you doing here?” I never told him what was going on, just that I was here hanging around seeing what was going on, this and that. Then in the opening ceremonies, me, Fred Cameron and Lars Larson showed up with sombreros and “Viva Mexico” shirts. There were some Americans riding for Canada then, too, and they quit letting people do that shortly thereafter.

You hit a cow once didn't you?

Yeah, that was in 1975 at Isle of Man. Yeah, I had some stupid stuff happen to me. I mean the first time I went was on the Ossa in 1970, and I didn't even know I was going, didn't even know what the Six Days was. I had no idea. I figured it was six days of racing. But John Taylor came into the R&D shop at Yankee

where I was working, and said “Well, is your passport current?” I said yes and he said “You're going to Spain in three days. Dave Eames can't go. He's in the Coast Guard and they won't let him off to go to Spain and you are the only other guy we've got. We've got a bike, we've got an entry, we need a rider and you're going.” This was actually after I had met Mick Andrews, and when I got over there he was still riding an Ossa, too, and he kind of babysat me for a few days and he tried to show me what to do and what not to do. Needless to say the Ossa turned into a pile of junk after three days. I had been doing really well up until then, but Spain was really dusty and the Ossas had poor air filters. They had this plastic gauze that was popular in the '60s and '70s and it stopped rocks and small animals from getting in there, but that was about it. It just ate the motor. The Ossa ground to a halt by the end of the fourth day.

Back to motocross, I think in 1979 or 1980 I saw you ride a very muddy Atlanta Supercross. You made



Finishing 10th overall and first in class at the Baja 1000 in 1988: Higgins, Casey Folks, Brian Farnsworth, Bill Bertho, Pete Shehan.

good money that night. I remember that night you were running third, until you got stuck and wound up finishing tenth or so. That was one of your last Supercross races, right?

That was the last one, maybe it was 1980. Yes, because in 1981 I just rode the Amateur day because we had a big blow-up with the AMA in the middle of that over a qualifying discrepancy and it was not—well, not pretty. I don't know if you remember Tom Jones who helped us back then, he was so mad when he found out I didn't qualify after he thought I had, because they screwed up the qualifying order. Tom picked up this Snap On tool box that weighed at least 100 pounds under one arm and four Maico wheels under the other, put his head down and walked out the tunnel at the Atlanta Stadium. I think if he'd seen somebody in an AMA shirt he would probably have hit them. He was so mad he turned in his AMA card. It was a big mess—and they made it worse later when I told them I was sending my license back and where they could stick it. Then they sent me a notice because I didn't show up for Daytona and Louisiana and they sent me a letter to fine me for \$75 because I didn't show up. And then there were letters going back and forth and then Cycle News got wind and then they

(AMA) called me and said it was turning into a pissing contest and if I would come to Houston or New Orleans, they would put me right in the program without having to qualify. I said you are making it worse, you're going to have some guy who thinks he's qualified not get to ride on account of me, so just forget it. I'm not riding anymore AMA Pro events. It was a disaster. That was pretty much the end of the Pro stuff, other than some ProAm stuff. I was about done then anyway. I was too old.

How about the altercation once with Marty Smith in 1977 at Burnt Hickory Motocross Park in Dallas, Georgia?

Yeah it was right before I was leaving for the Six Days. In the first moto he was second and I was third or fourth and I passed the guy in between us, then I passed him riding my enduro bike with the taillight on it and I guess it pissed him off. We went down a big downhill that had a 180 degree left turn with a small jump before it. After I jumped over the mound, I kind of knew he was back there and I was on the grass on the left hand side of the turn and he came down on the grass. I didn't know at the time who it was and I went to make the left-hand turn and I started going straight because somebody was running into the back of me—I kept trying to turn and kept going straight, and finally I knew how to push back harder than he thought I did and I just made the left hand turn and remember the Honda going end-over-end into the bushes. After that moto he came over telling me I had no business being out there.

You had no business being out there, but you passed him?

He was going to do this and do that and I told him I was leaving for the Six Days after that National and I didn't have Honda to pay my fine if I got into a fight with him in the pits, but I'd be happy to see him after the race outside the pits and knock his Honda teeth down his throat for him. Needless to say he didn't show up for that. And it's kind of funny because he is a good rider and all that, but a friend of mine took a picture of that very same race. Smith was all mad. In the second moto Bob Hannah got knocked down on the start, broke his clutch lever, got back up, caught everybody and passed him, and a friend of mine has a picture that shows Hannah coming alongside Marty and he's probably a foot or two higher than Marty and you can see his clutch level hanging there and he's looking at Marty and pulling a tear-off off at the same time, and Marty has his race face on—and Bob's just up there going no big deal I don't need a clutch, while the thing is flapping out in the air.

Any words from Marty since then?

You know it was funny when Rick Dougherty had that Legends thing at the GP back in 1990 at Hollister and he came walking up and I thought “Uh oh,” he said hey and asked how I was doing. I guess he had forgotten about it or he didn't remember who I was, but he was really nice.

How about being an inductee to the AMA Hall of Fame a couple of years ago?

Yeah, they let me know about a week before the ceremony, but I had already committed to race a vintage race in Europe or I would have been there because it was a great honor.

After your Pro stuff, you just concentrated on the business and riding local events.

Yeah. The business came toward the end of the pro stuff. It started out as a hobby and it quickly became way too much work. 'Course I could be like most guys going to a business where they hated their jobs. Well,

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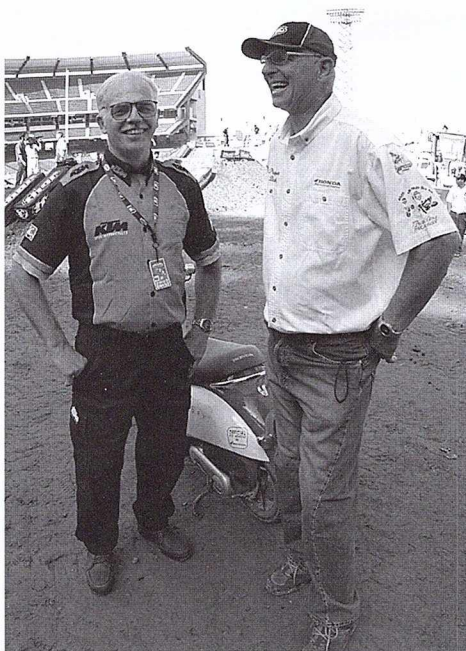
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there are times that I hate this place, too, but I'm doing something that I like. And I get to do these vintage races and I still get to go to Europe and ride each year. As far as the motorcycle business goes, I figure I got to see Europe on my own terms, and not out of the back of an Army truck with a gun in my hands. I've gotten to be in every county in east and west Europe, got to go over all over North and South America. I got to do things people don't ever get to do and it was fun, and the pressure wasn't on like it is now for guys. I'm sure some of these guys have fun racing, but it's big business now, it's big money. You go to a national now, and if there's something the team doesn't like—there are more lawyers than there are guys in the pits. That comes with the money, and the fun factor is out.

Every time we do one of these Past Master or Vet things—and we've been doing a lot of them—and I see Jim Pomeroy or Brad Lackey and we all get sitting around talking about that. It was a damn adventure back when we were doing it. We were a bunch of kids running all over the country living in our van or car having a really good time and it was a job, but it was more of a party than a job. Nowadays, these guys get paid big money with big time sponsors that want them to not only to produce, but to show up and look respectable. Hell, the more disrespectful we looked the better we thought we were.

What's the future of MX?

Well, when you see what's going on with GPs—down to a single moto and single this and single that—I don't know. I know I'm old school and old stuff, but Motocross des Nations is coming here in the first year of the new format—one moto—and to me that's a sellout. I know I stink as a spectator anyhow, but to me as a spectator that's a rip-off! Let alone it's a rip-off for the rider. When countries spend thou-



At the Anaheim SX with Gary Bailey. (Scott Cox photo)

sands of dollars to send a team to the Motocross of the Nations, for one stinking moto, that is disrespectful to everyone, let alone the public. I mean I'm sure the Open class disappeared in this country as a national class because of the factories, and I really don't think that the motorcycle industry as a whole should be dictating to the sanctioning body what they are going to do and how they are going to do it. There should be input from the riders and stuff, but nowa-

days the GPs all three classes are on the same day—one moto, some qualifiers and practices. At least our nationals are still two motos and fairly long, not like they used to be, but I can kind of understand that because of the TV coverage, but don't turn our sport into pro wrestling. That's all well and good for the money the guys are making and the risks the guys are taking, but as a racer it's too much show business and not enough racing for me.

But I guess that's what appeals to the public. The guy sitting in front of you is thinking little Johnny can do that because he's crazy and the guys make it look so easy and the fans don't have a clue how hard that is to do, and they don't get their money's worth out of that that they should. One thing with Supercross is that after the first lap in most races the racing is over. To me that's not where it's at.

You go to local motocross or off road event for that matter, everybody wants to be a B or C rider. You move them into A and they quit or they go to another race organization. They pay them a little bit of money at local races and there are 10 guys in the A class and 80 guys in the C class. There are guys coming along that are good, but I believe there are less than back when I was racing. When I started there were a handful of guys who could win a national, then it got to where on any weekend one of 20 guys was capable of winning, now we're back to the handful. Of course Carmichael continues to be the exception. The guys behind him are not a threat to win at any given time.

Bubba Stewart's doing that now in the 125s.

Stewart still needs experience. He is by far the fastest guy out there, but he still does silly things. If he lives through two seasons of doing silly things now and then he is going to be unbeatable, and you know Carmichael is looking at him saying I hope he doesn't

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Sort of like McGrath looking over his shoulder at Carmichael?

Exactly. Everybody else was thinking about McGrath for so many years. Everybody has their time. There is always somebody who is dominant. The cross country stuff hasn't been a complete run away for anybody, now that they are paying those guys some money and they are making a living at it. I guess Watts probably came the closest to winning all the races one year, but there were other guys winning races and doing battle with him. In motocross everybody asks who is going to get second today. McGrath had those guys so psyched out a couple of years ago, when they got around him they were so worried about being in front of him they would do something stupid and he'd pass them.

Like back when Weinert was doing the nationals he was the big psych-out guy and he would screw around with you and some guys it worked on and some it made mad and they went faster. But it just seems now, I don't know for sure, but it seems like they are all convinced Carmichael is going to win.

It is a different ballgame and a lot of that has to do with the money. There are a lot of people making and spending money at it, sponsors and stuff. All of those guys that have been national champions, none of us have gone on to become brain surgeons. We made a lot of money. Brad and I were talking about that the

other day. He made a lot of money riding GPs and I made my fair share doing Nationals and neither one of us knew how to do much more than ride motorcycles. I was luckier than some. I knew enough to know how to work on bikes a little bit, and we were talking about how we thought this was going to last forever and then somebody turns off the switch and you think—now what am I going to do? Like my friend, Mick Andrews. Two times World Trials champ and multi-time British scrambles champion. The guy's never had a job in his whole life other than riding motorcycles. He is 58 now and he wants to move to this country and ride bikes, but he doesn't have a way to make a living. You can't do it doing trials schools and vintage races. So he's still in England even though he wants to be here! Later on I guess Marty Smith was the first guy to have much brains about him. He had a business manager and got people to invest his money. We were all just spending our money.

Brad was probably the worst case of that—spent all his money, and bad investments where he did invest. Weinert might be actually worse than Brad. Weinert is working in the (family) scrap yard in New York. Tried to get him to come to Mid-Ohio and he wouldn't even return Pomeroy's calls. I don't know what he's up to. Last time I saw him was in Unadilla in '93. This guy had a lot of money at one time. Ill-fated business ventures and other things he shouldn't have been doing,

he ended up broke. There are a lot of guys like that.

Of course, I don't know that having money is all good either. I doubt there is a handful of guys riding nationals and Supercross because they love it. That's why I still race, ride and work with bikes—I LOVE TO DO IT. I was lucky enough to come along at the right time, I could make some money at it. Now when the guys lose their factory ride and the money you never see them at a race after that. Like Bob Hannah—when was the last time anybody saw him ride a motorcycle? He was a great rider and set a lot of records, but the point is that the guys don't love it. They do it because they can make a lot of money at it and hopefully they've invested it well. I'm not sure that's really good for the sport either. But a lot of those guys get into other things and they coach, but a lot just set back and enjoy their money. Then again, if I had their money maybe I'd be the same way!

Riding keeps you fit and active and in better shape than an armchair quarterback. You get to see your friends and when do you ever do that? At a high school reunion where you sit around and try to figure out who people are or what happened to them!

Regardless of what people think about motorcycles and racing, and no matter that while you were doing it these guys were your adversary, like me and John DeSoto getting into fist fights. But now when you get our age, all we remember is the good stuff and the good times that we had. The guys now don't even hardly talk to one another.

What would you say to the amateur?

The biggest thing I see wrong at amateur racing is just about every single kid on the line at the local race thinks he is going to get a factory ride and a box van and mechanics and there are only a handful that are going to get to do that. Kids come in the shop and I hear "If I don't get some help from somebody I'm going to quit riding." Jason Raines proved you can do it with determination, as he drove himself around the country, worked on his bike with very little help, and got a factory ride. I know it is expensive but it's a hobby! Race because you love to do it. I know I did!

Barry and his wife Patti, currently own and operate H&H KTM in Douglasville, Georgia. What started out as a hobby has turned into a full time job. "Patti has done an outstanding job on the business end of the shop," Barry told us. "Without her, there is no way we would be anywhere near where we are today. She handles all the website stuff as well. Me, I just run the back."

After the unfortunate collapse of Maico in 1984, Barry and Patti took on a lesser-known brand, KTM, and with much hard work convinced their customers the bikes were good. Slowly, folks made the switch and with new customers along with way, H & H has been the number one KTM bike and parts dealer in the country for years. They are currently building a second shop on the east side of metro Atlanta.

When Barry is not working on a KTM or vintage Maico, he is working on their beautiful 58-acre horse farm where the couple lives in Temple, Georgia. "Patti's got us down to just 23 horses now," Barry said with a grin. He is still very active in vintage racing, as well as modern bikes. Two years ago he laid out an outstanding 2.5-mile long, old-style motocross track that's all natural with tons of turns and elevation changes called Running Brand Grand Prix in Centre, Alabama. Recently, he won three vintage classes and two modern classes—a total of ten motos! He still catches a scramble or two, too. Could he have run with Hannah, McGrath, or Rodney Smith? You betcha! But I believe Barry Higgins fits in much better with the old school pioneers. ↑



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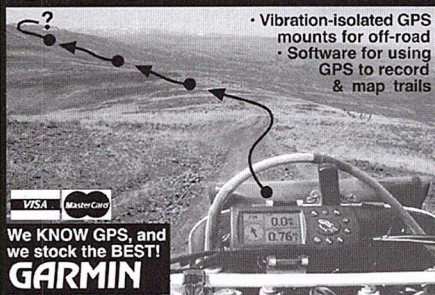
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by Ed Hertfelder

Trailblockers

It always seems strange to me that you can leave on an eighty mile dual-sport ride entirely surrounded by most of the dual-sport crowd from a four state area. Inside of an hour the fast troops, who have waited for the rider's meeting to end with one foot on their kick starter or one finger on the start button, will disappear out ahead and for just a little while I'll see the dust from their passing still settling on the tighter turns.

Soon enough the only sign of the speeders will be globs of mud still dripping from branches alongside a muddy ditch. Without fail, one or two mud blobs flung higher in the branches by a wildly spinning rear knobby will wait for just the right moment to drop, plopping their messy slop right onto the last remaining patch of clear vision left on your visor.

Then you might pass a few dozen riders of the type who need most of a day to get warmed up to their proper operating temperature. These troopers have left the start before the rider's meeting ended. Later, you drift past another dozen unattended motorcycles leaning against trees as their riders drain most of the coffee they indulged in before, during, and after breakfast. Guaranteed, these riders have ridden off to make this pit stop before the riders meeting even got started.

Soon enough you'll think you're the only person left in the entire world as you motor along the trail well fed, dumb and happy. With a full tank of fuel, maybe a new—well at least recent—tire at each end, enough water to last until noon and a full box of malted milk balls in the jacket pocket that has so many holes in the lining that anything smaller would have been long gone.

Those holes, I remember, were the result of carrying a professional size chain-breaker on an enduro that included way too much riding between the rails of an abandoned railroad.

After about forty-five minutes of lovely solo progress the Devil will begin to trouble my brain with thoughts of "you missed a turn, you missed a turn, you must have missed, missed, missed a turn two miles back when you shut your eyes for a second to sneeze a bug out of your nose." Followed by more Devil-inspired possibilities five minutes later: "there is a mistake on the route sheet, there is a mistake on the route sheet, there is a bad mistake on the route sheet."

Whoa there, maybe the Devil is right! Wasn't that a hand-lettered correction about six and three tenths back?

Okay, Devil, I'll take over with my OWN dire thoughts, such as "we're heading into a bottomless swamp with millions of mosquitoes that can drill into a full-face helmet and raise enough swollen bites on my bald head to make it look like a Titleist golf ball with ears!"

Or I'll start to think that maybe the fast guys up ahead have decided they made a wrong turn and will soon appear coming back at me three wide and showing a lot of skid plate. It COULD happen you know, and I always found it's best to keep all your braking muscles ready and waiting on the respec-

tive pedals and levers.

On most of a well laid-out dual sport ride there won't be too many grey-topped ladies in Buicks turning suddenly right about the last foot of your stopping distance. Being prepared, always, for the Buick to do something stupid can make the difference between stopping with your front tire just touching a chrome side strip, or sitting on the highway watching a rattled older lady dragging your latest 'ride' toward the cornerstone of a rather substantial masonry church.

You won't meet many Buicks on a thirty six inch wide trail, but I'll tell you what I have met, and some of it is hard to believe.

I have met, and more than once, two riders stopped side by side just after a sharp, blind, downhill turn, completely indifferent to the fact that at least a hundred other riders are scheduled to be coming along later.

An off-road modified Volkswagen beetle coming toward me with its windshield well mud-splattered. We squeezed past each other, but he was wearing dual wheels on the rear and pretty much needed to take his half of the trail out of the center.

A Honda four-wheeler wrapped in a pipe roll cage that I missed, but who hit the rider following me pretty much head-on. After the collision the Honda's twelve year old pilot took off running downhill in a southwest direction. Later I discovered the pipe roll cage was a stock item on this model! Makes me wonder if they should have called it THE EXTERMINATOR.

A stolen and partially stripped '55 Chevy with a six cylinder engine. The hood was up and my stopping distance was reduced when my helmet hit the fire-wall. That's how I knew it had a "stovebolt six." Made me wonder why anyone would steal an automobile equipped with a POWERSLUSH automatic that had performance only slightly better than a St. Louis sternwheeler with a leaky boiler.

The split back end of a large horse, female I recall. And one day I met three of the better-behaved

younger South Jersey Enduro Riders, apparently disassembling a KTM right on the trail. They were body-blocking the rest of us riders asking for an eight millimeter Allen wrench which, apparently, held the KTM's front axle. As I was just about the last rider, certainly the last carrying ten pounds of tools, the only way they could repair the flat front tire was to drop both fork legs out of the triple clamp, dismount the tire and tube then slide them off the fork leg. Not exactly the fastest way to fix a flat, eh?

Much later, six months or so, I realized that there might have been some way to turn that KTM Allen using the metric nuts and bolts in my tool kit.

We could have put two nuts on the proper size bolt, dropped the bolt head inside the Allen socket then turned the bottom nut until it jammed against its mate, locking the makeshift tool solid.

And let's not forget the four hundred pound bear that walked out on the trail where I was stopped removing my jacket as the sun came up. That monster was between six and nine feet away when I yelled "YO!!" loud enough to be heard in eastern Wisconsin (I was in Michigan). The bear spun around and went back into the woods at the same place he came out. They say getting close to nature is enjoyable. Don't believe it.

Not on a trail but on narrow dirt roads I've met:

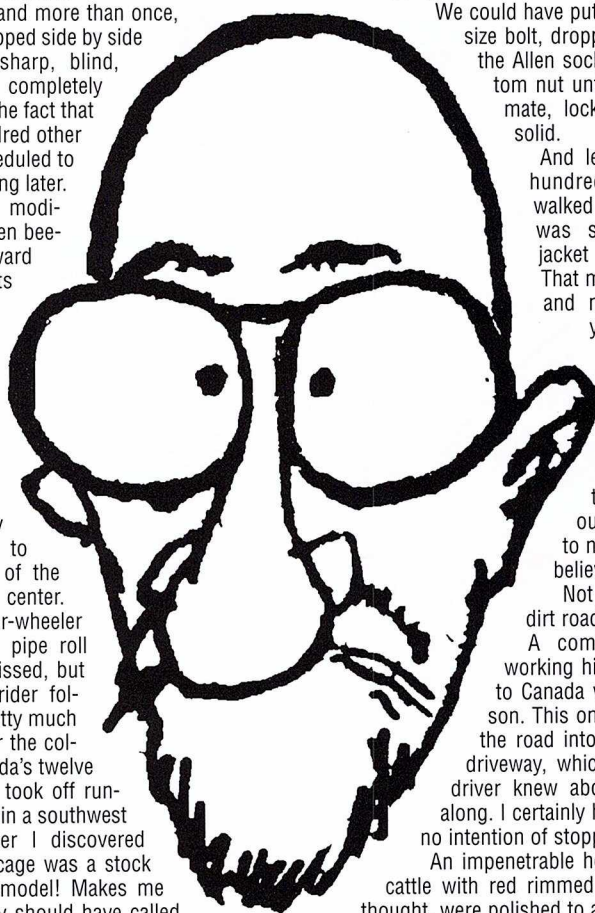
A combination reaper-binder working his way north from Texas to Canada with the harvesting season. This one ran me completely off the road into someone's providential driveway, which I believe the binder's driver knew about and counted on all along. I certainly hope so because he had no intention of stopping that thing.

An impenetrable herd of wall-to-wall black cattle with red rimmed eyes and horns that, I thought, were polished to an intimidating gloss.

Notice how I always respectfully capitalized Devil. At my age I don't want to take any unnecessary chances.

—Ed Hertfelder

Ed Hertfelder is a teller of tales and writer of books, as well as author of the globally famous Duct Tapes stories. Want a list of Hertfelder columns from 1986? Ask nice with a S.A.S.E. to Ed's ranch at P.O. Box 17564, Tucson, AZ 85731; or E-mail to ducttapes@yahoo.com. ★



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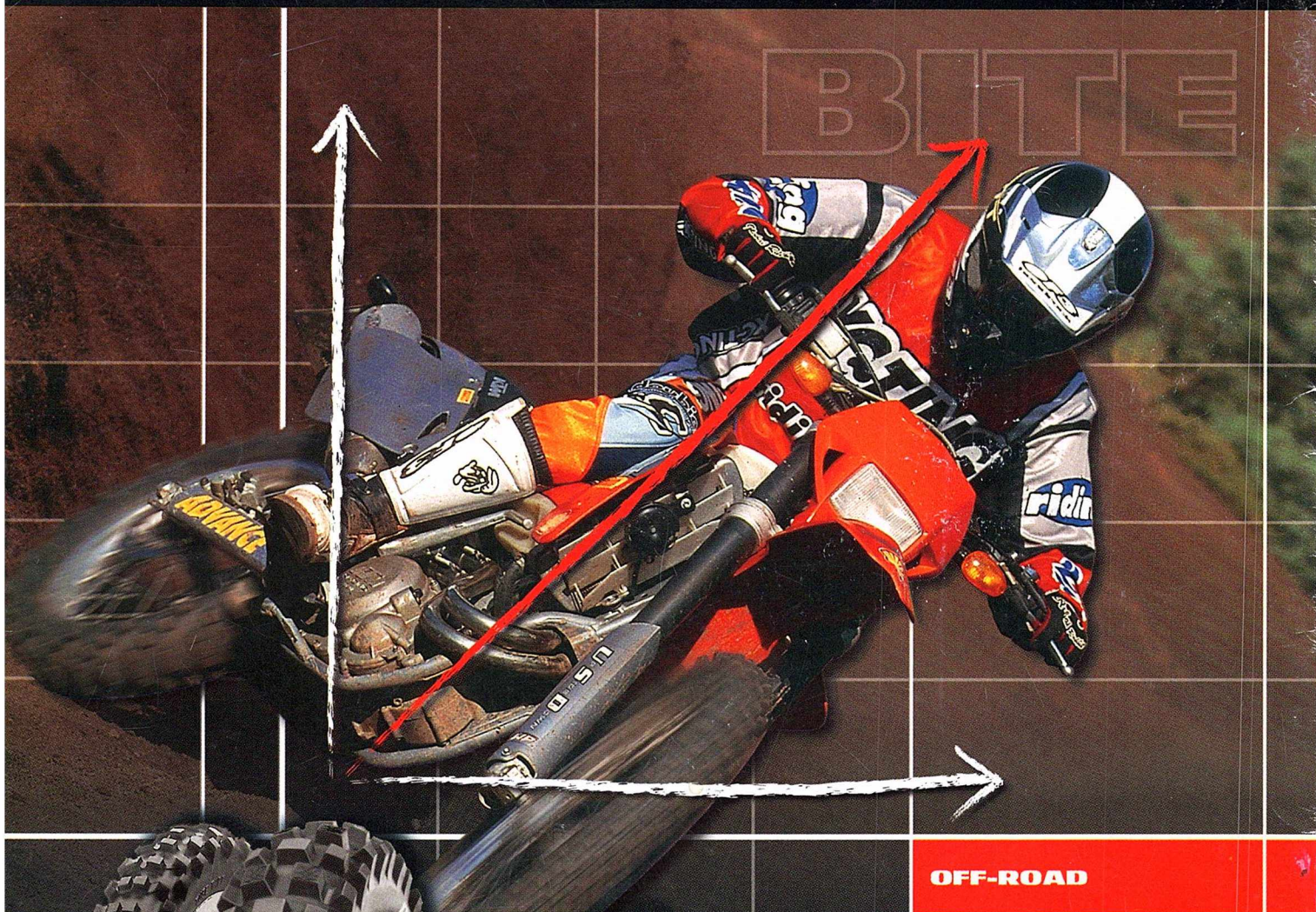
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